The Middlebury Campus

VOL. CXXII, No. 22 | MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT, MAY 9, 2024 | middleburycampus.com

"We will hold them to those promises": College and encampment reach agreement

By MAGGIE REYNOLDS, KATIE FUTTERMAN & RYAN McELROY
Editor in Chief & Managing Editors

CHARLIE DEICHMAN-CASWELL/ THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The college released a statement on Monday morning calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and indicating future negotiations on other demands.

At 11:45 a.m. on Monday, May 6, students began packing up their tents, putting an end to the seven-night Gaza Solidarity Encampment on McCullough lawn. Students voted this past weekend to end the encampment as soon as the administration released a statement, and did so immediately when President Laurie Patton sent an email outlining an agreement between the student protestors and administrators shortly before noon.

The college's statement, titled "A Commitment to Common Educational Values," called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. Otherwise, it did not use the specific language the protesters used in their five demands. Instead, it expressed the themes of every person's right to pursue an education peacefully, the value of transparency in investing and financial communication, creating educational possibilities for those who are displaced or at risk and the value of celebrating Middlebury students with a safe graduation.

"We still disagree about many fundamental issues, but we share concerns for the devastating effects of the violence in Israel and Gaza

Continued on Page 2

Investigation into MCAB uncovers months of unchecked spending on concerts, Aritzia jackets

By RYAN McELROY
Managing Editor

Unprecedented spending. Comped dinners. Aritzia jackets.

Amidst student anticipation for the upcoming spring concert, the Middlebury College Activities Board (MCAB) has faced mounting questions for these spending decisions, among others, from this academic year.

The nine-person board has misused funds for personal gain, failed to communicate with the student body and blown past budget allocations, according to a draft of a Student Government Association (SGA) bill.

The draft bill is still being revised; its current proposals include increasing SGA oversight over MCAB and creating a separate concert committee with a cap of 17% of total student activities fee revenue. The final version of the bill will be voted on this Friday, May 10.

The issues plaguing MCAB this year were confirmed to The Campus by over ten sources, including several SGA senators, the co-director of the SGA Finance Committee and current MCAB board members. The draft resolution was obtained by The Campus from a public website but has not yet been shared widely with the student body.

MCAB's budget includes 33% of the revenue generated by the student activities fee, and its total budget last year was $405,786, according to documents from the SGA. The activities fee reached $500 per student for 2024–25, according to the college's web page.

One major concern that prompted the upcoming vote by the SGA was the MCAB-sponsored spring concert,

Continued on Page 3

A firsthand account of the stabbing on College Street

By SUSANNA SCHATZ
Senior News Editor

Huy Tran '24 was walking home from Shaw's Grocery with a friend around 8 p.m. on March 20 when a man approached him from behind and attacked him with a knife. Jerry L. Hoffman, 31, reportedly wielding two knives, stabbed Tran in the back four times.

Hoffman was charged with attempted murder in the second degree, aggravated assault with a weapon and resisting arrest. He pleaded not guilty and is currently being held without bail, most recently in the Marble Valley Correctional Facility.

Tran is a Computer Science major and Chinese minor at Middlebury and studied abroad in Taiwan last year. At Middlebury he has been involved in TedXMiddlebury and Distinguished Men of Color, and is currently a board member of the Vietnamese Student Association. He is originally from Vietnam but his family moved to Houston, Texas when he was a child.

On the evening of March 20, Tran and his friend — who does not attend Middlebury, but was visiting over spring break – were chatting while walking up College Street across from Twilight Hall returning from their trip into town when Hoffman reportedly attacked Tran from behind.

"It was just a regular day," he told The Campus.

Tran said he did not immediately realize he had been stabbed and was confused initially because it had happened so quickly. When he turned around, he did not recognize the man behind him.

"My initial thought was, oh, maybe he misunderstood me as somebody else," Tran said.

But when he turned around and the man continued stabbing him, Tran realized it wasn't a mistake. He then tried to get away.

"He shoved me to the ground and he started kicking me and so I told my friend to call 911," Tran said. "I was on the ground and, you know, I got stabbed, so I couldn't do much, so I yelled out 'help.'"

Tran said that he picked up a snow shovel that was leaning against the house and attempted to use it to defend himself from the attacker, but he was pushed to the ground again. He recalled that he was reluctant to hit the attacker with the shovel because he did not want to aggravate him further, and his attacker did not say a word throughout the entire attack.

The attack occurred outside of Hoffman's home on College Street. Tran said that a man who appeared to know the attacker come out of the house.

Hoffman then entered the house, according to police records obtained by The Campus. The house is located across the street from Twilight Hall and is owned by Middlebury College.

Tran then got up in search of help. He described crossing the street and knocking on multiple doors before finding someone to help him. He knocked on the doors of the language houses on College Street but they seemed to be empty, likely because the college was on spring break at the time.

When a woman eventually opened the door for Tran and his friend, he recalled telling her he had been stabbed and asking her to call an ambulance. Tran was taken first to Porter Medical Center by Middlebury Regional EMS and was then transferred to UVM Medical Center in Burlington, where more resources were available to treat his injuries.

A 911 call was placed at 7:51 p.m. by Tran's friend who had been walking alongside him when the attack occurred, and soon after, police arrived at Hoffman's home.

When police arrived, Hoffman emerged from a dark area of the yard holding two knives, as captured by a police body-cam video. Police Officers instructed him to drop the knives while they pointed their guns at him. Hoffman then fled behind the house and into Otter Creek where he stayed for about 15 minutes before eventually dropping the knives and coming out of the water. He was then arrested and taken to Porter Medical Center to be examined after his exposure to cold water.

The college sent out an emergency alert at 8:13 p.m. on March 20 alerting students of police presence on College Street and instructed students to remain indoors for the time being. Students were then given an "all clear" alert at 8:40 p.m., though many students were not on campus at the time because the college was on spring break.

Hoffman has a history of mental health issues and drug abuse, according to police records. He has been arrested in multiple states for drug and assault charges, including for assault and meth use in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

Evidence observed and collected by police at Hoffman's home "indicate Jerry Hoffman was experiencing severe emotional dysregulation in the days before the incident, and they demonstrate Jerry Hoffman was preoccupied with or actively pursuing violent responses

Continued on Page 3

MONITORS STOLEN FROM ROSS DINING HALL

By KATIE FUTTERMAN
Managing Editor

A Ross Dining Hall checker was doing morning setup around 5:45 a.m. on Monday, April 30, when the Department of Public Safety alerted the dining hall staff that both computer monitors had been stolen, the receipt printer had been smashed and the wires had been torn out of the ground.

"It was frustrating," the checker told The Campus. "This is my work station, so I felt a little bit like my private space had been taken."

The college confirmed to The Campus that at 5:50 a.m., a custodial supervisor reported a smashed printer and missing monitors at Ross Dining Hall. Public Safety is still investigating the incident, and it remains unclear how the perpetrator entered the Ross complex.

The checker said that no windows were broken in the dining hall area. The person would likely have needed ID access or been granted entry by someone else in order to steal the items.

Since the vandalism, students have entered the dining hall by merely showing their IDs to the checker, which means that anyone with a Middlebury ID can enter, but no one can do guest swipes.

"We can't decide on who has a meal plan and who doesn't due to the system not being up," the checker said.

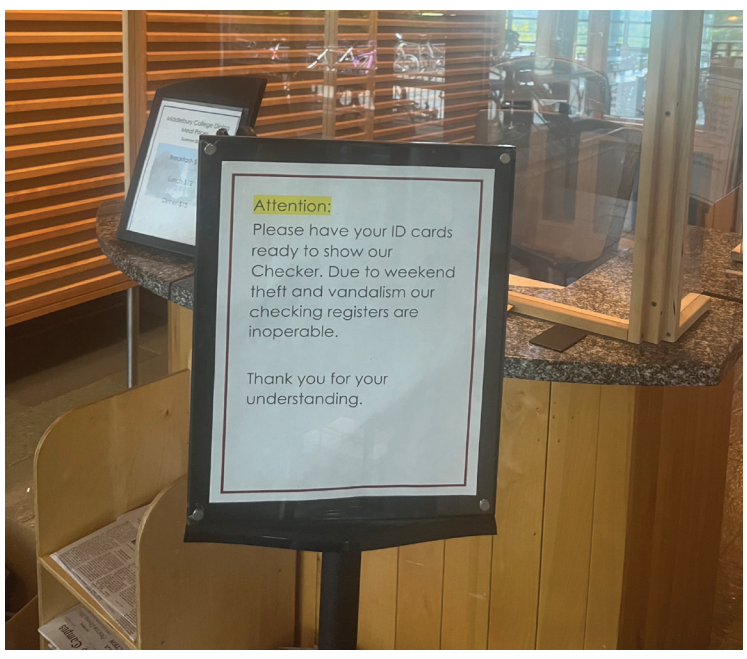
At around noon on Tuesday, May 7, they began to set up a new monitor system in Ross. As of Wednesday, the system is still not fully set up.

The checker added that it is unclear how the monitors, which they said only have the system for the IDs in it, will benefit the person who stole the equipment.

John Dow, another employee in Ross Dining Hall, said that it also seemed like the person had tried tampering with the drawer at the checking station.

"Assuming they think there's money in it. There might be a dollar in it," Dow joked.

On the same night as the incident at Ross, a student called Public Safety at 2:23 a.m. to report a broken window in Atwater A. Residential Life and Public Safety responded to the report. The facilities department was notified to begin repairs, according to the college.


Attention:
Please have your ID cards ready to show our Checker. Due to weekend theft and vandalism our checking registers are inoperable.
Thank you for your understanding.

KATIE FUTTERMAN / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

In order to enter Ross Dining Hall, students just show their ID.

NEWS

Faculty to reevaluate credit requirements
By MAGGIE REYNOLDS

Laurie Patton to depart Middlebury in 2025
By MAGGIE REYNOLDS, KATIE FUTTERMAN and RYAN McELROY

▸ PAGE 2

LOCAL

Weekly line dancing cultivates community in Middlebury
By EMILY HOGAN

▸ PAGE 5

OPINIONS

Why you should vote in this week's referendum on divestment
By LUCY SCHEMBRE and AKSIL BOUGHIDA

A call to action for student-led change in campus organization administration
By COLE SIEFER

▸ PAGE 7

ARTS & CULTURE

Theatre Department sticks the Orland-ing
By CATHERINE GOODRICH

Americana: a Brit's eye view
By DAISY INNES

▸ PAGE 10

SPORTS

Women's lacrosse wins NESCAC title, turns attention to NCAA competition
By CHARLES CROUNSE

▸ PAGE 12

Faculty to reevaluate credit and distribution requirements

By MAGGIE REYNOLDS
Editor in Chief

Amidst proposals from the Student Government Association (SGA) to change the credit limit from 36 to 34 and institute a climate distribution requirement, the faculty Educational Affairs Committee (EAC) will appoint a taskforce to revise curriculum goals during the 2024-25 academic year.

The task force decision comes after faculty discussed reducing the credit limit, adjusting the distribution requirements and how to best provide developmental support for students at the April faculty meeting. According to Associate Professor of Theater and Faculty Council member Dana Yeaton, however, an impulse for curricular changes had been building for a while.

"I get the impression there is a fair amount of momentum behind all of this," Yeaton told The Campus. "There is some sense among faculty that it is almost overdue."

Attendees at last month's faculty meeting split off into three breakout rooms to discuss the topics of support for students with less pre-college preparation in key academic areas, the credit reduction and academic distribution requirements. Bert Johnson, professor of political science and a member of faculty council, said conversations around these topics at the April meeting led to a feeling of need for broader curricular changes, prompting the creation of the taskforce.

While the taskforce begins to assess the possibility of changing distribution requirements and implementing more developmental support over the next year, according to Johnson, there is also the opportunity for more immediate change.

Johnson described the possibility that the faculty could introduce motions to reduce credit requirements from 36 to 34 and revise the AP credit policy as early as the September faculty meeting, the first one of the new academic year. From there, faculty would be able to vote on the proposals at the subsequent full faculty meeting in November.

In the discussion room on the credit reduction, faculty brought up the fact that such a credit reduction had been considered back in 2004, when faculty voted to change from requiring four to two Winter Term classes, but it did not end up being taken up at the time. Attendees cited the fact that other schools with a Winter Term, such as Williams College and Oberlin College, only require 32 credits.

SGA Academic Affairs Committee representatives present at the discussion described the benefits of a credit reduction in providing more flexibility for students during a challenging semester mentally, or during a semester when they are taking a particularly intensive class, such as writing a thesis. The representatives stated that they had considered proposals to adjust the credit/no credit policy or other alternate grading modes, but ultimately decided a credit reduction was the easiest solution to achieve the goals of greater academic flexibility.

Faculty members and administrators at the meeting expressed support for the greater leeway the change would provide for students who need it.

"Our admissions department is capable of changing the demographics of this campus faster than we're capable of adjusting our student support systems and our expectations," one person said. "And this is a moment when we could quite quickly make a meaningful difference for those students that we are choosing as an institution to bring here."

Still, faculty stated concerns that the credit reduction could eventually lead to a faculty reduction, narrow a student's academic focus if they take fewer courses overall, or simply give students more time to "take jell-o shots."

The discussion room on academic distribution requirements talked about the disparity between the current distribution requirements, established in the early 1990s, and the college's learning goals. Faculty expressed disappointment with the fact that they were not given the chance to vote on the new institutional goals – known as the Four Fluencies – which were added to the college website last year.

Faculty present noted that of the eight distribution requirements, students are most likely to skip language, science or literature. They described the possibility of requiring all eight distribution requirements, instituting a mandatory language requirement, or creating thematic distribution requirements, such as AI, climate and social justice.

Members of the SGA Environmental Sustainability Committee were present at the meeting to discuss their proposal for a climate distribution requirement. The committee had been doing research on such requirements at peer institutions, talking to faculty and garnering support for the proposed distribution requirement from environmental groups across campus throughout the academic year, Maya Millner '26.5, a member of the committee, told The Campus.

According to Millner, the committee looked at how courses across a wide range of departments, from Apocalyptic Writing to The Chemistry of Climate, could fit into the proposed distribution requirement. Millner added that she found the discussion of the climate distribution at the April faculty meeting to be productive, and she hopes it is picked up by the taskforce looking at curriculum revisions.

"We want to make sure that climate education doesn't get left behind," she said.

The third discussion room on developmental support for student success and access discussed solutions to the fact that more students are coming to Middlebury without necessary prerequisite knowledge for introductory classes in subjects such as calculus and chemistry. They characterized the academic curriculum as having been designed around the expectation that students come to Middlebury with a prep-school knowledge-level, and increasingly more students from diverse backgrounds makes this curriculum design flawed.

"If we are going to broaden our scope to bring in students who have more diverse educational backgrounds, then it is on us to make sure we have the programs and the curriculum," Yeaton said.

Some proposed ways to provide more developmental support included expanding the Midd.data program — which invites a cohort of first-year students to come to Middlebury early and get introduced to specific professors and courses — increasing support for students in STEM courses through the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research (CTLR) and adjusting alternative grading options.

Across the board, faculty described the need for reevaluation of the curriculum to meet current needs and learning goals of the college, given that it has been at least a decade since any substantial changes have been implemented.

"We have to look at the moving target that is our student body and the curriculum," Yeaton said.

College and encampment reach agreement

CHARLIE DEICHMAN-CASWELL/ THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The protesters began dismantling their encampment on McCullough Lawn on Monday morning following negotiaions with the administration.

Continued from Page 1

on educational opportunity for all in the region," Patton wrote in the email. "The document is future-oriented, outlining pathways for fruitful deliberation at Middlebury on the profoundly painful issues that the violence raises."

After taking down the encampment, the protestors hosted a rally at 1 p.m. on McCullough Lawn, where patches of dead grass marked the spots their tents had occupied for a week. The organizers of the camp declared their efforts had succeeded in pressuring the administration — but added that there is still more work to be done — to a crowd of around 75 students.

"We are nowhere near done. Emails are commitments to change but not proof of tangible action," a speaker told the crowd, going on to describe the task force and other areas of progress from the talks. "We will hold them to those promises."

The five core demands the protestors outlined when they set up tents on Sunday, April 28 were divestment of Middlebury's endowment from holdings in companies that profit from Israel's military campaign; freedom of speech and protestor amnesty; an end to association with Israeli institutions and businesses; and cultivating association with Palestinian academic and cultural associations without a requirement that the college partner with Israeli counterparts as well.

The college's statement called for an immediate ceasefire and end to the violence.

"We condemn unequivocally the killing of all innocent civilians in Gaza and Israel, where no civil society, including educational institutions, can continue in the midst of such destruction. Palestinians and Israelis cannot learn in an environment torn by war," the college's statement read.

"This may be a symbolic step, but it's an important one," a speaker said at the rally.

The college also confirmed that it is not currently invested in arms or arms manufacturers, and resolved to talk with trustees about sustaining and codifying not investing in armaments. The Board of Trustees will convene for its already scheduled meeting beginning this Friday, May 10. The college did not confirm whether its investment in arms and arms manufacturing will be addressed at the upcoming meeting. The statement pledged to share the details of the commitment and provide updates.

The college's statement also addressed the value of educational exchange, but did not make explicit mention of cutting ties with the Israel Institute — one of the encampment's most controversial demands.

"Together we will explore avenues to host all students in the region displaced by war and violence. We appreciate the encampment's focus on the displacement of Gazan students," the statement read.

The Faculty Council told the administration that it would be more beneficial for them to resolve the debate about the Israel Institute internally, which a spokesperson for the encampment, Josh Glucksman '24.5, said is his preferred solution as well. He added that there are other professors who are funded similarly to the Israel Institute, through external programs and organizations.

Those at the encampment also called for students to fill out the referendum sent by the Student Government Association (SGA) in solidarity with Gaza, which will close at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, May 9. The form asks students four questions about their attitudes toward full financial transparency on investments, divesting the endowment of all holdings in companies engaged in arms manufacturing, divesting of holdings in companies that engage in war profiteering and divesting of holdings in companies that engage with any Israeli businesses.

According to SGA President Abed Abbas '24, encampment leaders brought the referendum to the SGA midway through last week. Abbas and the other SGA senators worked with the protestors to revise and update the language of the referendum through Sunday night.

Abbas described his commitment to encouraging political engagement and activism at Middlebury.

"We are very proud of how activism has been over the last week, because we are all looking at other schools and Middlebury has just been unique in the reaction from students and the reaction from the administration. That's something to look up to," he told The Campus on Monday afternoon.

As of 3:45 p.m. on Monday, the referendum had received over 1,000 student responses. Abbas said he and the other SGA senators have committed to promoting the referendum for a couple of hours each day this week, and he hopes to reach 70 or 80% voter turnout by Thursday.

The protesters will bring the results to their meetings with trustees on Friday, May 10, they announced at the rally. Glucksman told The Campus he was grateful for the SGA's willingness to work with them through the referendum process the past few days, and looks forward to continued action on their campaign when meeting with trustees.

"We will be the loudest, most belligerent, most unshakeable welcome team that the Board of Trustees will ever see. While they're getting their coffee, idly discussing their summer plans in their Fortune 500 companies, we will be there. When they're strolling across the crowd trying to enjoy Vermont spring air, we will be there," Glucksman told The Campus. "We will be there right outside of their window, smiling."

He added that the resolution on Monday held extra significance given it is Holocaust Remembrance Day.

"Standing against genocide is saying 'never again for any people,'" Glucksman told the crowd.

The gathered students chanted a variety of other statements as well, including "Not another nickel, not another dime. No more money for Israel's crimes" as well as "one solution, intifada revolution" and "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free."

A speaker added that the administration will also form a task force on campus dedicated to combating various forms of hatred including Islamophobia and anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian discrimination.

The statement and disbandment are a result of a series of meetings between negotiators and members of the administration. On Saturday, May 4, the encampment held a vote — open to anyone involved — to disband based on a rough outline of the anticipated administrative statement. An overwhelming majority voted to disband the physical encampment if the administration released a statement meeting the demands, according to Glucksman.

A meeting on Sunday, May 5 between students and the administration resulted in stronger wording on divestment and freedom of expression in the final statement.

On the outskirts of the gathering, closer to McCullough Student Center, stood a group of administrators from different areas of the college with varying levels of involvement in the recent negotiations. They stood and listened as the protestors ended the encampment while calling for continued action towards the referendum and momentum for their demands.

"Tents were only ever a symbol of our dedication. The righteous anger and fight for solidarity with Palestine continues. The encampment continues with each of us," a speaker told the crowd.

Across the lawn outside of Voter and Munroe Halls stood at least one Public Safety officer. The encampment has previously spoken with Public Safety officers during their weeklong protest about which, if any, college policies the protest was violating.

A press release following the rally described the national context in which Middlebury's protest amidst thousands of arrests at other universities across the country, sharing that the lack of police involvement was the "bare minimum" expectation for student safety.

"We recognize that negotiations between the Gaza Solidarity Encampment and Middlebury College took place in an atmosphere of relative calm," the organizers wrote in the press release. "It is our hope that this sets a strong precedent for institutional responses to student activism now and in perpetuity."

The campers are now dispersed around campus and plan to encourage students to vote in the referendum.

"We don't have a plan except to continue putting pressure on them," Glucksman told The Campus.

A firsthand account of the stabbing on College Street

Continued from Page 1

to that instability," the police report stated.

Tran spent the night following the incident at UVM Medical Center before returning to campus the following day. He said that the recovery process was very difficult.

"I couldn't walk around for more than like 10 to 15 minutes because I would just get a headache. It was hard to lay down or sleep," Tran said.

Tran took a medical leave of absence during the first two weeks following spring break. He said professors were accommodating, but he encountered some challenges communicating with group project members while on his leave.

"Most of my classmates thought I dropped the class... so I had to communicate some of the information to them," Tran recalled.

Tran said that he has physically improved a lot since the attack. He spoke briefly about the emotional impact of the event over the past couple of months.

"I personally try not to think about the case that much... I told my friend or my close friends I just don't want to live my life feeling like a victim," he said.

He described still feeling some anxiety following the attack, however.

"It makes me feel unsafe walking at night. It's something that I usually don't think about when I go to Middlebury because it's a relatively safe college. But now, you know, walking at night or like past 8 or 9 p.m., I would often kind of have this feeling, like, oh, somebody's behind me," Tran said.

Ultimately, Tran said he is focused on finishing the school year right now. He looks forward to graduating and returning to Houston as he searches for a job.

Hoffman's father was interviewed by police following the attack and shared his suspicion that his son was using meth at the time of the attack. "When he takes meth, he gets very paranoid," Hoffman's father wrote in his written statement.

Hoffman's mother also provided a written statement to the police on the night of the stabbing.

"My husband and I have been trying to get some help for Jerry. Today I told him that I didn't feel safe with him, and I needed him to leave the house. I was begging him to let us help him," she wrote.

Hoffman's mother also described plans that were made earlier in the day on March 20 for him to begin treatment with the Counseling Service of Addison County the following week.

"I was able to get Jerry to call the [emergency] hotline and they made arrangements to begin an intake next week," she wrote in the statement.

When police visited Hoffman's home, they found holes punched in the wall. Hoffman's father said his son caused this damage.

Hoffman's father also described that his son had recently started walking around the house with a knife in hand, leading him and his wife to remove all of the sharp knives from the kitchen and hide them in their bedroom closet, according to police records. Hoffman's parents stated that it was possible he took some of the kitchen knives before they were moved or that he found the knives in the closet and took them from there.

In an interview with the Addison Independent, Middlebury Police Officer Chris Mason said that the attack appeared to lack a clear motive.

"As far as we know there really is no motive," Mason said. "There's no connection between the victim and the assailant... It doesn't appear to have been a robbery attempt."

The stabbing was deemed "random and arbitrary" in police records, and the reports concluded that "given the violence of the assault and the severe risk of death thereby provoked, it is reasonable to infer that Hoffman was attempting to murder Tran."

Mason told the Addison Independent that police believe substance use and mental health to be factors in the attack, which was substantiated by the statements from Hoffman's parents.

"The attempted murder was severe, brutal, and cruel, as evidenced by the multiple stabbings inflicted, as well as the fact that Hoffman pushed the victim to the ground and repeatedly kicked him while he was prone after stabbing him," an officer wrote in the police report.

State's Attorney for Addison County Eva P. Vekos is the prosecutor in the case. She has recently been under scrutiny for her January DUI charge and has been called to resign.

Hoffman currently awaits trial for the three charges against him. If convicted, he could face life in prison and heavy fines. A status conference, a meeting in which evidence may be exchanged and plea bargains discussed, is set for June 21 in the case of the State of Vermont v. Jerry Hoffman.

Investigation into MCAB uncovers months of unchecked spending on concerts, $250 jackets

Continued from Page 1

which features Flo Rida, a well-known American rapper who will be performing on Battell Loop this Friday, May 10.

The board voted to spend significantly more than what was spent last year to secure the artist Ferg as the spring 2023 concert headliner, according to current MCAB board member and business manager Erik Budo '26.

"[The spring concert] is a lot of money, far more than we were allocated to spend and more than has ever been spent on a spring concert," Budo said. "We voted on that as a board. However, we reallocated funds in a way that kind of disadvantaged other clubs on campus."

Several other members of MCAB who asked to remain anonymous shared a similar figure for Flo Rida. They stated that the overall expense for this year's spring concert will be $215,866.21, which they claim is not unprecedented. These MCAB members cited combined costs for the separate concerts by Ferg and Sage the Gemini in 2023; Flo Milli, Crumb and Anime in 2022; and did not specify in other years. In the figures provided to The Campus, they compared costs of the one concert with Flo Rida to multiple concerts in past years that featured several artists.

"Naturally, more popular artists charge higher prices. We've spent more to accommodate the artist fee and inflation. Flo Rida will also be bringing dancers and a larger stage. Considering these additional components, the price is reasonable," the MCAB members wrote to The Campus.

One of the consequences of repurposing funds to pay for the spring concert was limiting the funds in the Small Concert Fund available for incoming requests. According to several SGA senators interviewed by The Campus who asked to remain anonymous, the Black Student Union [BSU] submitted a timely request to MCAB for funding from the small concert fund this spring but said they were unfairly denied.

"They were denied because MCAB wanted to save the money to use for this larger concert, even though the money is supposed to be reserved for smaller concerts," one SGA senator said.

In a statement to The Campus, the executive board of BSU confirmed their request to bring an emerging Black artist to campus for their Night of Black Culture was rejected by MCAB.

"We find it interesting that there was a small level of grace offered to our Black Student Union, being that MCAB out of all clubs would know the necessary levels of planning, direction and understanding that goes into wanting a concert," the BSU board members wrote. "It's disheartening to learn of MCAB's lack of respect for cultural organisations such as BSU, especially when it comes to initiatives that they put out themselves in a directive to boost student-ran organisations."

BSU board members added that they felt unsupported by MCAB, and took issue with how MCAB blamed them for making a request close to the deadline when the organization failed to provide adequate information upon their initial inquiry.

A staff member at SAO confirmed the presence of an issue, writing that the past one to two years of MCAB funding were "a-typical," and then proceeded to criticize the SGA resolution as a disproportionate response to the issues at hand, according to several members of MCAB.

One of the most egregious examples of MCAB's misappropriation of funds was the purchase of Aritzia Super Puff Jackets, which the board voted to order for themselves in the fall, according to Budo. Budo said he voted against the order, as MCAB had already received its traditional Executive Team sweatshirts and the puffer jackets had no Middlebury or MCAB branding.

Multiple MCAB members from this year confirmed to The Campus that the majority voted in favor of the jackets, which all members then received.

"It was not a close vote at all," Budo said.

Other MCAB members shared their perspective on the group's vote in favor of the expenditure.

"When it came down to anonymously voting, the majority voted in favor of the purchase and all board members opted to purchase a jacket," the MCAB members wrote. Board members did not make any direct contributions to the costs of purchasing the jackets.

A member of MCAB told The Campus that they understood the questions over purchasing the jackets, but their advisor was consulted and approved of the expenditure.

"On the topic of the jackets, although it could be argued that purchasing them is a question of moral standing, in the least we consulted with our advisor at length and did not violate any college policy," they wrote.

David Wilder, Student Activities Office (SAO) Director of Programming and Events and advisor for MCAB, wrote in an email to The Campus that he did not believe that MCAB has misused its funds in the jackets, since it was within the historical range of expenditures on MCAB merchandise, but the club would follow additional guidelines in future "team building expenditures."

Budo added that he informed the SGA president and other members of SGA of the situation this spring after the jackets were ordered because he disagreed with the organization's decision to purchase them.

"That was a huge misstep in my opinion," Budo said. "I don't have a problem with club merch. I know a lot of clubs do it, there's nothing wrong with that. But these jackets were not branded at all. They were straight from the website"

According to Aritzia's website, the jackets can range from $250 to $375, depending on the style.

Multiple members of MCAB confirmed that they spent $1,011.53 on the Aritzia jackets, in addition to further subsidization from SAO and their gift account to bring the total spending to $1,622.85.

"I feel like the money should be returned, because that is theft in a lot of ways, or at least misuse of student resources," one senator said, adding that they believe MCAB members from the fall should not allowed to return to the club next year, but such a decision is out of the SGA's control.

SGA senators also discussed how MCAB is a paid position, a fact which they said was not widely known among the student body. According to a current MCAB board member, members of the organization are paid a $500 stipend each semester.

Another senator also cited other concerns regarding the operational budget for MCAB — which is provided via the SGA Finance Committee for many clubs on campus — being used for meals and other improper expenses in the name of team bonding, according to multiple SGA senators.

"[MCAB] mentioned in the Senate meeting they attended that they purchased meals during orientation week for team bonding. SGA also does eat together, but we eat in the dining hall, as most students do during that week," said one SGA senator

One SGA senator who spoke to The Campus agreed that the reasons for the jackets did not justify the expense.

"[MCAB] said the jackets were for team bonding," the senator explained.

MCAB members defended their decision to purchase Aritzia jackets, however.

"In lieu of team bonding or other types of merchandise, we thought it would be best to invest in more practical club merchandise like winter coats instead of using this portion of the operations budget on additional meals or team bonding," wrote the MCAB members.

Another senator objected to the fact that MCAB did not bring up the jackets at various meetings with the SGA this spring, although the members admitted to other expenses, such as catered dinners.

"This is something that they intentionally hid," the senator said.

Representatives from SGA met with MCAB at least four times this spring, and most recently discussed the SGA draft bill on Wednesday, May 7. One particularly tense moment was when an MCAB board member attended a recent SGA General Assembly meeting and, unprompted, defended their spending on the jackets.

Multiple sources told The Campus that the amount of money spent on the MCAB Aritzia jackets was more than combined annual budget allocations for six of the least funded clubs on campus.

Budo first reported his concerns regarding the organization's expenditures this spring to SGA after excessive spending on jackets in the fall and reallocated funding from the Spring Student Symposium as well as the Major Speakers fund and Small Concerts fund.

Multiple members of MCAB confirmed that their spending on concerts exceeded the SGA Finance Committee allocation by over $60,000.

"I'm hoping that MCAB leadership can really step it up next year to ensure that some of this stuff doesn't happen again," Budo said, adding that he does not intend to rejoin MCAB next year. "I think a great place to start is by lowering the budget and keeping people more accountable."

According to the SGA draft resolution, 11 people applied for nine positions on MCAB next year, and six people on next year's board will be returning members.

The resolution has been shown to members of MCAB in recent discussions, and the SGA senators interviewed by The Campus stated that no one disputed the numbers listed in the draft resolution.

SGA Finance Director Bruno Coelho '24 shared that the MCAB budget and finances are under the purview of its SAO advisor, who works with MCAB and coordinates their expenditures.

Coelho shared that the MCAB budget is approved by the SGA Finance Committee, but has undergone changes in recent years.

"As of two years ago, due to a lot of different complex processes, the SGAFC ceded control of both MCAB and club sport funding to org advisors in the SAO who are more knowledgeable in the inner workings of day-to-day operations and are able to make better decisions on how funds are used," Coelho explained.

"I still believe that institutional knowledge to be very important and necessary, but that it may be good to explore the return to SGAFC approving MCABs budget on a yearly basis," Coelho wrote, adding that all the parties involved needed to meet and identify the problems as well as solutions together. "The issues that have been raised cannot be addressed by one party alone."

The draft resolution also criticizes MCAB on other issues, including how its internal allocation decisions may not suit the needs of the student body, its failure to solicit student input for the spring concert or sufficiently advertise events to students, and its inability to be communicative with and accountable to the SGA.

Budo, who helped develop the resolution, looks forward to the structural reforms for MCAB next year.

"I really do think that the budget reallocation will be very effective. It is definitely a little bit radical. I don't think we've ever seen a club change this much over one summer, essentially. However, I think this is the way to do it," Budo said.

Wilder, MCAB's advisor from SAO, agreed with the general ideas of the SGA resolution, but did not approve of all the detailed points listed.

"The SAO and MCAB are in support of these recommendations as presented in broad strokes," Wilder wrote in an email to The Campus. "However, I believe there are aspects of the resolution that are too specific to the detriment of its own efficacy."

Multiple SGA senators and MCAB members, in addition to Wilder, shared that they met together in March and April to discuss these issues and find solutions prior to the resolution's draft.

The SGA senators also described a possible violation of MCAB's constitution with the recent appointment of MCAB's co-presidents for 2024–2025. The president of MCAB is required to have served at least one semester on the club's executive team, but the organization is still supposed to advertise its open positions to all who qualify.

"The Selection Committee shall publicize open Executive Board positions in the spring for the following fall," the organization's constitution states.

However, multiple SGA senators told The Campus that MCAB did not send out any such notice to the school about the open presidential position. The student body received an email on April 5, 2024, which advertised a variety of positions, but not the presidency.

Multiple MCAB members shared that their organization had not included three former MCAB members who were eligible for the presidency in their initial communications, a mistake which their SAO advisor corrected.

"Since we haven't concluded the selection process yet, there is nothing unconstitutional about this year's presidential appointment," the members stated, after admitting to the initial violation of their constitution's election procedure.

Amidst its issues, MCAB will be hosting the spring concert this Friday for hundreds of students to attend, and it will remain one of the most well-funded student organizations on campus next year.

It is unknown whether the proposed SGA reforms will be passed on Friday, and if so, whether they would be accepted and implemented by the SAO for next fall.

DON'T THROW IT AWAY:

Sustainable solutions for moving out

By DANI PROHASKA
Contributing Writer

As the academic year comes to a close, the student body begins to pack up and head home for the summer. But each year as people take their belongings with them, many things inevitably get left behind.

The Middlebury Sustainability Solutions Lab tries to minimize the negative effects of move-out week, and student interns are working on waste management projects throughout campus to neutralize the college's environmental impact. The lab's main focus during move-out week is to communicate with students and the administration.

"The [Sustainability Solutions Lab] has a move-out poster, locations and special collection sites. "[They] try to really be in communication with the recycling center, because I think that relationship is very important and has been helpful in the past," said Tessa Husted '26.5, who works as an intern at the lab, where she focuses specifically on waste management and consumption at the recycling center.

The Sustainability Solutions Lab was founded in 2017 and over 150 student interns have participated in more than 40 environmental projects around campus, according to its website. Middlebury's website describes their mission as "provid[ing] students with paid experiential learning opportunities for sustainability in practice and cultivation of critical thinking and professional skills... [interns] explore, reimagine, and implement action-based solutions, utilizing a lens of environmental justice to share Middlebury's evolving sustainability journey."

According to Husted, a main cause of poor recycling habits on campus is the lack of outdoor recycling bins.

"The most convenient bin around campus is a trash bin, we don't have recycling bins spread across, you can only find them inside the buildings," she explained.

Kim Bickham, a supervisor for waste management and custodial services, said that another problem is the non-sorting policy at the recycling center. During Covid-19, Facilities Services separated all of the trash and recycling. Since January, Bickham described, if recycling is mixed with trash, all of it goes into the trash.

Because sorting through recycling is not a normal practice, staff has had to figure out how to collect non-contaminated recycling.

The center cannot sort through recycling, so the trash going into landfills from the college has increased over the years. When they used to sort during the Covid-19 pandemic, the average diversion rate (the trash/recyclables that do not go to the landfill) was around 65%, but in the past few years it has dropped to 50%.

Both Husted and Bickham described unreturned dining hall dishes as one of the most unsustainable practices year-round.

"My folks clean Proctor in the morning, just the bathrooms. In the bathroom in the new study spaces across from the bookstore, there are dishes there every single day," Bickham said.

Many of the dishes that are not returned to dining halls by the end of the year go to the recycling center. There were 3,500 pounds in dishes left for the recycling center staff to handle for the 2022-23 school year, according to data collected by the recycling center annually. Dining Services has spent $18,000 on dishes since the beginning of the fall semester to the end of March, and they expect to spend at least $25,000 by the end of spring.

Another contribution to waste reduction is the reuse trailer project, which has electronics and clothes, among other things, and has big sales in June after students move out, as well as during orientation week. Husted hopes to make the free-use trailers more accessible to students throughout the year at the recycling center so students always have a place to drop off unwanted items instead of throwing them in the trash.

According to the recycling center staff, thousands of pounds of waste unnecessarily go to landfills. For the 2022–23 school year, scrap appliances totaled just under 16,000 lbs, clothing was about 20,400 lbs and electronics were 3,800 lbs. Many of these items can be reused and dropped off at the recycling center, the staff explained.

Much of the bedding at the recycling center goes to international bundles or services like the Charter House coalition, so students can bring more than just appliances to the recycling center when they move out of their dorm rooms.

Husted described the most difficult part as the fact that students do not plan ahead for their move out. "When it comes down to it, everyone's in a rush to get out so they don't sort things and stuff gets left all over the place," she said.

Bickham emphasized the importance of separating trash and recycling both year-round and during move out, specifically.

"If folks can think about reducing, reusing, and recycling and separate trash from their recyclables or reusables, things like books, clothing, textiles, shampoos, soaps, unwrapped food, those kinds of things, the more we can keep out of the landfill," Bickham said.

COURTESY PHOTO/TESSA HUSTED
The Recycling Center holds boxes of items students leave behind.

Laurie Patton to depart Middlebury in January 2025

By MAGGIE REYNOLDS, KATIE FUTTERMAN & RYAN McELROY
Editor in Chief & Managing Editors

COURTESY PHOTO/ MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
Laurie Patton will become the president of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

After almost ten years at the helm of Middlebury College, President Laurie Patton has announced her intention to leave her post in January 2025. As the 17th president and first woman to ever hold the position, Patton leaves a legacy of leadership and expansion at an institution that has faced unprecedented challenges in recent years.

"I've been able to accomplish the dreams that I had, with and for Middlebury," Patton told The Campus on Thursday morning.

Patton will leave Middlebury to take on the position of President of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. She was elected to the Academy in 2018 in two categories: philosophy/religion as well as educational and academic leadership.

The college's announcement comes at a moment of uncertainty in Middlebury's community and higher education at large, something that both Board of Trustees Chair Ted Truscott and Patton acknowledged in interviews with The Campus on Thursday.

"I was and have been all in at Middlebury and would have been happy to stay several more years. This opportunity was a once in a lifetime opportunity, so it has nothing really to do with politics of campuses. If anything, these kinds of conversations energize me, and I feel like even though they're hard, Middlebury has been dealing with them really constructively, and I'm all in," Patton told The Campus.

Truscott described Patton's departure as bittersweet for the college.

"The Board is very happy for Laurie, very supportive of Laurie," Truscott told The Campus on Thursday morning. "We're all sad to see her go, quite frankly. It's a tremendous honor for Laurie, and it reflects well on Middlebury that she's achieved this honor."

Truscott said the search committee for the new president hopes they will have found a replacement by July 2025, which is the start of the new fiscal year. He added that the process for finding a new president will be expedited in hopes of accomplishing this goal quickly and ensuring continuity with her accomplishments.

"At the end of the day, I think that means we can perform this search probably a little bit more expeditiously than the last search. We're going to take our time with this, but it's going to be more expeditious," Truscott stated.

Truscott distinguished the plans for this upcoming search from the presidential search 10 years ago, which resulted in Patton's appointment as president. That search process included more of what he described as constituent dialogues about the future of the college.

"So when I think about that, I don't think we need to have tons of constituent discussions. I think people have been very vocal about what they expect from Middlebury, and I think Laurie has delivered on a lot of that," he said. "It's really about continuity."

Before coming to Middlebury, Patton served as Dean of Trinity College of Arts and Sciences at Duke University, and taught religion at Emory University and Bard College. She was inaugurated as president of Middlebury on October 11, 2015.

As Patton stepped into office, she inherited a structural deficit in Middlebury's finances. Throughout her term, Patton returned $38 million to the institution's budget. This past fall, she launched the For Every Future campaign, which has raised $444 million of its $600 million goal thus far. In the past three years, the college has received the largest fundraising totals in Middlebury's history, according to the press release from May 2 announcing Patton's departure.

Patton also made efforts to increase general financial transparency. In 2019, she unveiled Energy2028, in which the college pledged to divest from fossil fuels and put the institution on a path toward renewable energy by 2028.

Another key component of Patton's presidency was her emphasis on the college's relationship to the town of Middlebury. During her tenure, the college has subsidized the expansion of Otter Creek Child Care Center, doubling the town of Middlebury's childcare capacity. In April 2022, the college invested in an affordable housing project with over 200 units, which is set to open in 2025.

Access to the college has also improved under Patton's tenure. Currently, over 20% of students are the first in their family to attend college, nearly 40% are domestic students of color and almost 50% of Middlebury students receive financial aid, according to the college's press release.

The college has also faced numerous challenges during Patton's ten years as president. On March 2, 2017, Middlebury was rocked by the guest lecture of controversial sociologist Charles Murray, which resulted in a national media coverage and disciplinary proceedings for dozens of students who protested against his visit on campus. In March 2020, like schools across the country during the Covid-19 pandemic, the college announced it would send students home for the remainder of the semester. It then implemented varying levels of restrictions on gatherings and classes until fall 2022.

While her years here have seen challenges, Patton has remained at the college longer than the leaders of many other universities. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, in 2023 the average tenure of a college president is 5.9 years, down from 6.5 years in 2016 and 8.5 years in 2006. Patton will have been the president of Middlebury for nearly 10 years when she steps down in January 2025.

The college will begin the search process for the next president in the coming weeks. According to Truscott, the search committee will consist of members of the Board of Trustees, as well as members of the Middlebury community, including staff, faculty and students.

Truscott said the committee will want the next president to work toward continuing the initiatives Patton began during her tenure. These initiatives Truscott cited include the "For Every Future" campaign, Energy2028, Conflict Transformation and effectively managing the Language Schools, Bread Loaf and the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

"I don't want to get too far out over my skis on this, but I'd say that the future president of Middlebury College will clearly want to put some have their own stamp on what they do going forward, but we will need that person to be committed to continuing the number of of great initiatives that Laurie has started," Truscott said.

Truscott affirmed that Patton's departure is related to the opportunity that presented itself at the Academy, rather than related to current political events.

"The political aspect of the job, which is always difficult, has not been part of this discussion or decision at all," Truscott said. "Yes, there's a lot going on out there in the world, but the politics have nothing to do with this."

The American Academy of Arts & Sciences is a scholarly society in Cambridge, Mass., founded in 1780 by John Hancock and John Adams, among others. The Academy is the second oldest intellectual society in the country, and its current membership includes former President Barack Obama, as well as many other Noble and Pulitzer Prize winners.

"Patton embodies both scholarship and leadership at the highest levels, and we are thrilled that she will lead the Academy as our next president," Goodwin Liu, chair of the Board of Directors at the Academy and chair of the presidential search committee, wrote in a press release on May 2. "She brings tremendous substance, vision, warmth and energy to the Academy's work of honoring excellence and advancing the common good."

Patton will succeed David W. Oxtoby, who stepped down as president of the Academy in October 2023 after over five years in the role.

Patton has taught a class in the Religion Department at Middlebury most semesters during her tenure as president. While Patton said she won't have time to continue teaching each semester when she takes on her new role at the Academy, she hopes to keep teaching in some capacity when time permits.

"I have so many deep friendships and collegial relationships in the community that I plan to stay in really close touch with," Patton added. "Teaching is so much a part of who I am that I couldn't really live without and teaching and learning with students"

Patton and her husband, Pardon Tillinghast Professor of Religion Shalom Goldman, plan to remain living at their current home in Shoreham, Vt., and Patton will work in Cambridge during the week.

The college has begun to bid farewell to Patton (and her beloved dog Suka) and to look towards its unknown 18th president. Middlebury will soon be entering a new chapter in its 224-year history as an academic institution.

"I think a lot about whether institutions have a soul, and I would say Middlebury has an incredible soul," Patton told the Campus. "I have real confidence and joy, anticipating what it will do around the things that matter most to it in the future."

EZ TRIPS UPDATES TRANSIT ROUTES, PROVIDES ON DEMAND RIDE SERVICE

By AGNES WANG
Contributing Writer

In an effort to improve transportation accessibility, Tri Valley Transit (TVT) announced the launch of EZ Trips on April 10, a free door-to-door on-demand ride service in Middlebury. Launched on May 8, the service is a potential substitute for services like Uber or Lyft, which do not exist in the area.

TVT currently operates the Middlebury Shuttle Bus on five neighborhood routes from Monday through Saturday: Porter Medical Center, Marble Works, Shaw's Grocery, the college and Hannaford Supermarket.

The transit service also currently offers the Dial-a-Ride program, a personal door-to-door transportation system catering to the elderly, disabled and Medicaid recipients. However, Dial-a-Ride requires booking rides at least two days in advance and relies on volunteer drivers and their vehicles.

Mary-Claire Crogan, the community relations manager for TVT's Addison County region, described the new EZ Trips program as a hybrid between the current bus services and Dial-a-Ride program. It offers the flexibility to book rides within the operation zone, and users can book rides online, via the EZ Trip app, or by calling TVT during operating hours.

After making a reservation, an EZ Trip van will promptly pick up passengers as close to their requested location as possible and drop them off as close to their destination as possible. Depending on van proximity and traffic conditions, wait times are estimated to range from seven to 30 minutes.

"This is exciting because we're able to serve a much larger trip zone, so people who currently have no access to rides will be getting new access," Crogan told The Campus. "They don't have to wait for that hourly schedule to come back around."

Maya Murtuza-Lanier '27.5 described having challenges navigating the current transit system, and echoed Crogan's enthusiasm for the launch of EZ trips. With the introduction of the service, Murtuza-Lanier said she anticipates going into town more frequently.

Murtruza-Lanier recalled wanting to go into town to buy cake mix for her birthday, but she had been feeling sick all week and wanted to avoid the walk there and back.

"I really did not want to go to town and did not have the energy to go into town and would have loved to take the bus into town, but couldn't and didn't really feel like figuring out the bus system," she said. "So I ended up walking anyway, but then had to chill for the rest of the day because I was so tired from walking into town while sick."

The EZ Trips operating zone extends down Route 7 to the Sugarhouse Motel, about 3.5 miles from campus, where Crogan said some community members are housed. The zone also encompasses the Middlebury campus, parts of the town of Weybridge, and extends to Lower Foote Street and Happy Valley Road — two neighborhoods the current transit system does not serve.

To decide on these routes, TVT worked with experts in the area to conduct a feasibility study that considered factors such as popular destinations, neighborhood concentrations and the residences of frequent Dial-a-Ride users. EZ Trips will replace the Middlebury Shuttle Bus Monday through Friday routes called Hospital, Marble Works, Shaw's and College. The transit system will revert back to the original one on Saturdays due to limited weekend staffing.

Middlebury's EZ Trips will replace the Monday through Friday routes, named: Hospital, Marble Works, Shaw's and College — the Hannaford route will continue operating as normal On Saturdays, the transit system will revert back to the current one in place due to limited weekend staffing.

Adirondack Circle on campus will be a new stop on the Hannaford transit route, created so that students do not need to walk to Academy Street to be picked up.

EZ Trips was first proposed by the state to expand access to rides for the town's vulnerable members. The existing Dial-a-Ride program lacks a sufficient number of volunteer drivers, and TVT only has funding to allow six dial rides per month per individual.

With the launch of EZ Trips, Crogan hopes that existing Dial-a-Ride users can more easily fulfill daily activities like shopping, haircuts and social meetups. Meanwhile, Dial-a-Ride will still be in operation for community members that require one-on-one services.

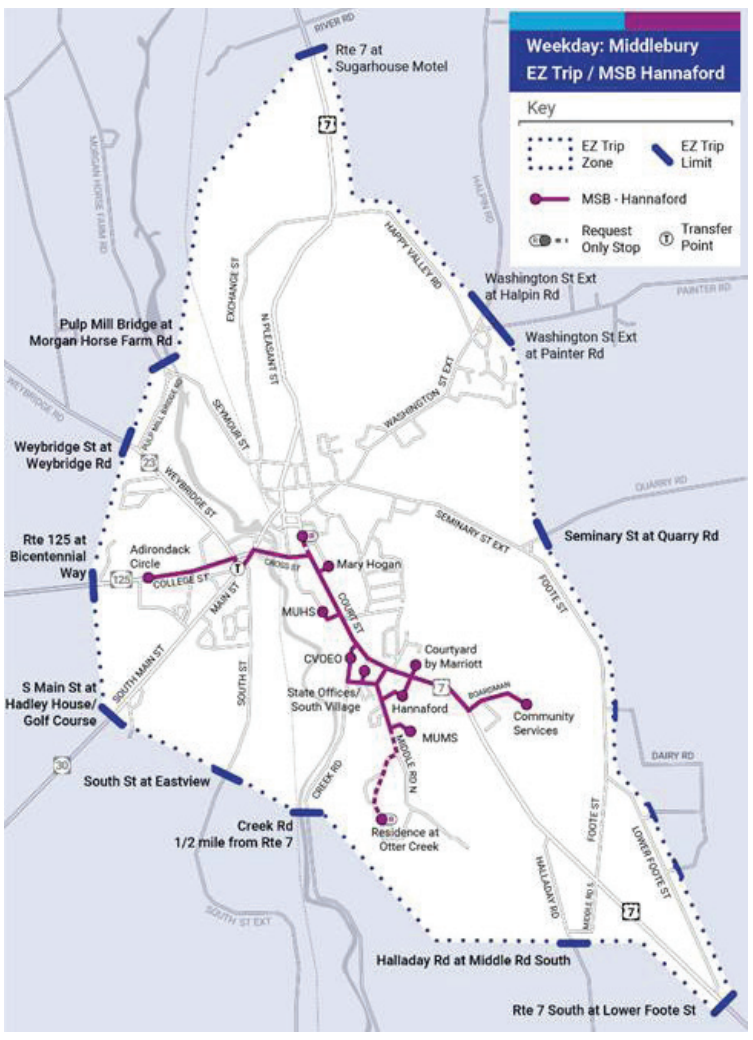
Intensive planning for the EZ Trips initiative began with a feasibility study in 2022, followed by collaboration with a software developer to design algorithms for the system.

Given Middlebury's existing transit infrastructure, however, planning for EZ Trips presented challenges. Community members rely heavily on public transit and have grown accustomed to established routes — Crogan stressed that this transition could be daunting for riders with cognitive disabilities.

To address these concerns, Crogan has been speaking at senior living facilities and adult daycare centers in the area over the past two months. She also met with community members who may have low reading abilities or cognitive disabilities to help customize their travel arrangements.

"We're not going to leave them behind," Crogan said.

Through a combination of federal grant fundraising and independent donors, TVT acquired four new vans for the launch of EZ trips that are outfitted with wheelchair lifts, Crogan said.



COURTESY PHOTO/MARY-CLAIRE CROGAN
The new EZ Transit routes will extend transportation opportunities to individuals who currently have no access.

Two of the four vans are electric, which is TVT's first attempt to work towards Vermont's carbon reduction goals: 10% transit fleet electrification by 2025 and 100% by 2050.

In addition to electrification, EZ Trips retains the ride-sharing component of public transit. Crogan explained that two vans will operate simultaneously, with rides batched in a way that makes sense geographically.

Tara Federoff, a sustainability specialist at the college, commended TVT for initiating this personalized ride-sharing program.

Federoff highlighted a Department of Energy study revealing that over 75% of individual car trips are under ten minutes long, contributing to environmental harm through carbon emissions and particulate pollution from chemicals, microplastics, and tires.

"Public transportation is notoriously difficult (and often expensive!) in the US and particularly in rural areas like Vermont, so seeing this accessible, affordable initiative is really exciting and it seems like it will be really beneficial for many community members and hopefully reduce individual vehicle use," Federoff wrote in an email to The Campus.

WEEKLY LINE DANCING AT WOODCHUCK CULTIVATES COMMUNITY IN MIDDLEBURY

By EMILY HOGAN
Local Editor

COURTESY PHOTO/STEVE JAMES, THE ADDISON INDEPENDENT
"It brings my soul back to life every time," said Warren, the instructor and owner of Good Time Line Dancing.

Since Middlebury-based Good Time Line Dancing began its first event at the Woodchuck Cider House in Middlebury a year ago, the partnership has fostered a tight-knit line dancing community of locals and students alike.

The event has since become a weekly dance every Thursday from 7–9 p.m. It attracts a variety of people from eight to 80 years old, with varying levels of line dancing experience.

"People drive up to an hour to come line dancing with us, and it's truly such an incredible environment," Andrea Warren, instructor and owner of Good Time Line Dancing, said.

Katie Rosa '24.5 has attended line dancing twice so far during her penultimate semester at Middlebury.

"I think that being in your fourth year here, you've experienced a lot of what the area has to offer, and it was really exciting to find something new," Rosa told The Campus.

When community members come to the event, they are met with a warm-up dance — usually the "Cupid Shuffle" — followed by a full beginners lesson. During the lesson, Warren teaches the dance by the eight-count before adding all the moves together and reviewing. Attendees then take a "cider break," with cans of Woodchuck cider available for purchase throughout the night, of course, before practicing again.

"Line dancing is more of a pattern memorization type of dance," Warren noted, emphasizing the importance of consistent review.

Rosa added that she enjoys the active, structured nature of line dancing.

"You just arrive and you're learning something. It's very engaging," she said.

The second half of the class is reserved for open line dancing, where Warren mixes between beginner dances for the community to pick up and intermediate dancers that she previously taught at Porky's Place & Backyard BBQ in New Haven, Vt. prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. She encourages folks to learn these more advanced steps by reviewing the instructional videos on her website.

Warren's weekly Thursday lessons at Woodchuck consist of primarily beginner-friendly dances.

"I encourage people to go home and learn some of the harder ones that I've taught in the past," she said.

Warren began line dancing in college in Rochester, NY. after a friend invited her to give it a try at their local line dancing bar. Soon after, she began taking line dancing lessons both at the local bar and her college.

"I learned as much as I could as quickly as I could and I was hooked right away," she said. "So it was kind of my thing."

When Warren, originally from the Addison County area, moved back home after graduating college in 2014, she learned that while line dancing had been popular in Vermont in the 1980s and 90s, there was essentially no visible line dancing culture anymore. She began teaching line dancing in 2015 and found success in 2019 at Porky's until the pandemic forced her to shut down the event.

"I restarted in March of 2023 and it just really took off," Warren said. On May 5, 2023, she began periodically hosting events at the Woodchuck Cider House, and eventually transitioned to more frequent weekly events at Woodchuck after Porky's sold in August 2023.

Over the past few months, line dancing at Woodchuck has begun to attract a significant portion of Middlebury students. Warren said she was grateful that word of the event has finally spread to the college community, given that she had been trying to advertise to the student demographic for a while.

"I had come to a few of the Thursday night 'college nights' at Two Brothers to try and spread the word and we did a couple line dances, but it didn't really catch on," Warren recalled.

Word did eventually spread earlier this spring, perhaps through a couple of students promoting it by word of mouth, Warren said, and it now attracts a significant portion of students every week.

Some of these college students have taken on the task of learning the more advanced dances.

"They get to come out and enjoy it during open dance, which is really cool to see," Warren said.

Charlotte Shapiro '24 is one such frequenter of Thursday night line dancing. She began attending earlier in the semester after she heard about the event through friends.

"It's a fun event to be doing with your friends...where you're really getting good at it and then can do it together... It's a fun atmosphere," Shapiro said. "And also I love country music, so that is fun to be around for sure,"she added.

Shapiro and her friends have enjoyed practicing some of their favorite dances such as "Shivers," choreographed to the song of the same name by Ed Sheeran, along with "The Wolf," choreographed to the song by the Spencer Lee Band.

Warren has enjoyed teaching these popular dances, along with one she recently choreographed herself, entitled "When She Moves," to the song "Been Like This," by Meghan Trainor. She also enjoys throwing on "Dancing in the Country," for the period of open-dance for beginners.

When asked what her favorite part of line dancing is, Warren said the people.

"It's always good vibes and people are always so encouraging and helpful—everyone's there to dance and have fun. There's not a bad seed in the bunch that I've found so far," she said.

Warren also noted that she loves seeing the smiles on dancers' faces and watching the crowd click with a song.

"It brings my soul back to life every time," she said. "It sounds cheesy but it's truly become my calling."

SUSANNA SCHATZ/ THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Line dancing has become increasingly popular among Middlebury students this semester.

BEHIND THE LABEL: VERMONT SOAP

By CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

Less than ten minutes away from campus in a solar-powered warehouse, Vermont Soap manufactures dozens of organic personal care products. Vermont Soap has been perfecting and expanding its natural soap products for over thirty years and distributes its goods locally and internationally.

Larry Plesent founded Vermont Soap in 1992 after struggling with personal skin sensitivities. He experimented with non-synthetic products before successfully developing a formula that cleared skin irritation. According to Plesent's LinkedIn profile, his "specialty is 'organic stuff that foams.'"

"He [Plesent] decided to start a company where he would create these products himself after really finding very few options in the marketplace. He developed some products that he liked, that worked for him, and then started spreading it out," Matt Drinkwine, senior private label accounts manager for Vermont Soap, told The Campus.

While Vermont Soap originated with bar soap, the company has since expanded its product line to include more items, including foaming soap and cleansers, cleaning products and pet washes.

"We found that a lot of people had sensitivities due to those types of products that they use to clean their bathroom or kitchen or washing floors. And also for doing laundry, which is another big trigger. Laundry detergent can cause itching and rashes even on some people's skin," Drinkwine explained.

In addition to producing its own line of soaps and cleaning materials, Vermont Soap manufactures products for other companies, known as private-label or white-label products. Drinkwine, who has worked at Vermont Soap since 2006, is in charge of white-label products.

Companies have the option to customize the scent and make additions to the formula.

"Quite a bit of what we do here is working with other companies that maybe want to create a product for their existing line of personal care products, or some companies that are trying to break into the personal care kind of market," Drinkwine said.

He described Vermont Soap as "primarily a New England brand," and all products are manufactured in Middlebury. Vermont Soap partners with the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-Op to sell products locally.

Its products are also, however, sold nationwide and even internationally to countries like Japan and Singapore. Vermont Soap also used to operate a retail store on Exchange Street Middlebury, which closed in 2023 after 25 years of business. Drinkwine cited the pandemic as a primary reason for its closure.

Vermont Soap currently operates online.

Sourcing local, organic ingredients is a cornerstone of Vermont Soap's ethos and a business practice on which the company prides itself. The company's website includes the tagline, "Organic before organic was cool." Drinkwine said that consumers have become increasingly aware of the benefits of more natural products.

"We focus on making organic products from food-grade ingredients. They're really high quality organic ingredients, and that's what we've focused on building our reputation on," Drinkwine said, adding that one Vermont Soap's missions over the years has been to educate people on the benefits of organic personal care. "Now it's pretty well known, and people kind of know, 'Hey, you know, why am I putting this synthetic stuff on when it's probably gonna cause me allergies or irritation down the road.'"

CHARLIE KEOHANE/ THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Manufactured here in Middlebury, Vermont Soap has an online presence and is sold at the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-Op.

When asked about his favorite Vermont Soap product, Drinkwine mentioned the foaming hand soap with the lemongrass scent.

"I love the feel of the soap and the way it works and the smell of it. I think it's really fresh and juicy, lemony," he said.

ON MEDIA COVERAGE ON THE ENCAMPMENTS — WHOSE VOICE IS INTENDED TO BE CENTERED?

Op-Ed

Jacob Burnett *is a member of the class of 2027.5.*

As Gaza Solidarity Encampments at universities have spread across the country, major media outlets have directed their attention to covering free speech rights, encampments as a valid form of protest and the history of student movements. While the violence towards and silencing of students deserve coverage, this narrative de-centers those at the heart of the conflict — Palestinians and Israelis. Our western outlets love to center America, and although America is heavily involved, the victims and the perpetrators remain thousands of miles from Middlebury's campus. The New York Times, The Guardian and my home newspaper, The Philadelphia Inquirer, have focused both daily coverage and op-eds on student and faculty activism at elite higher-education institutions.

In this op-ed I want to divert attention back to what matters — the safety of Palestinians and the Jewish people — from my perspective as an Ashkenazi American Jew. When we only focus on the validity and strategy of college protests, we lose sight of broader discussions on Zionism, Palestinian sovereignty and peace. I hope that this article can lay out some of my thoughts and provoke discussions on the more pressing issues at hand.

I would not say that I was raised in an ultra-Zionist family, but as is standard my synagogue featured an Israeli and American flag together just beside our bimah. The Jewish community in the U.S. is largely Zionist, if we define Zionism as the belief that a Jewish state ought to exist. My grandma remembers when the state of Israel was established. She was 14 at the time and excited. She told me that the sentiment amongst the Jewish community in Philadelphia was that "at last there was a place for us to go." Her parents had fled pogroms in the Russian Empire, and like many American Jews, hadn't felt comfortable in their new homeland. My grandma felt that with the creation of Israel, safety was finally guaranteed for a people who have faced persecution wherever they've lived. I haven't faced antisemitism to any degree close to my grandmother — partially because my presentation obscures my Judaism. Nonetheless, I can't deny the desire and need of subjugated people to ask for their own autonomy. This applies to Palestinians as well. Both groups deserve a state (whether it is a combined nation or two separate states) where they have their safety guaranteed.

I believe strongly that Jewish safety between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea does not require Palestinian dehumanization. In fact, the opposite is true. When violence is imposed, violence will arise. Since the Nakba that went hand in hand with Israel's creation, the Israeli government has supported Israeli settlements in the West Bank, imposed a blockade on Gaza and tried Palestinians from the West Bank in a military court that holds them in custody throughout all proceedings. On Oct. 7th, Hamas militants entered southern Israel, and carried out a massacre of 1,200 Israelis in Kibbutzim and at a music festival. In response, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) entered Gaza and carried out a decimating slaughter. The IDF has killed nearly 35,000 Gazans, and destroyed every single Gazan university.

This seemingly endless cycle of violence will not be solved by sensationalizing destruction and disobedience at colleges and universities throughout the United States. I care far less about a canceled commencement than I do about warfare on the ground right now. The proxy-war between protesters and counter protesters in the US that we hear so much about blurs a mission towards peace. I think it's more useful to listen to those on the ground, since only information and through empathy can achieve peace. Media attention focused on infighting at American institutions has and will continue to delay important coverage and conversations regarding Israel and Palestine.

These are excerpts from interviews conducted by Democracy Now, Amy Goodman's news radio show. It can be heard on Middlebury Radio, 91.1 WRMC weekdays from 8-9am.

Refaat Alareer was killed by an Israeli airstrike in early December. This is his friend, Jehad Abusalim, remembering Refaat: "Refaat Alareer was a towering figure in Palestinian society, especially in Gaza. He transcended the role of a mere educator and a teacher. He was a mentor, a beacon of wisdom and guidance, a loving father and husband, and a compassionate son. Refaat's presence enriched the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of students. His influence extended far beyond the confines of the classroom. Refaat wasn't just a teacher. He was a friend, a confidant. He was someone who loved to support his students and who believed strongly in the potential of each student, offering them personal advice and guidance. Refaat will be missed."

Hayim Katsman was killed on Oct. 7 at the Holit Kibbutz, in southern Israel. This is his brother Noy, speaking about his brother: "my brother was — so, he did many things. He was also a car mechanic. He was a DJ. He was a brilliant academic. He also was a gardener. He was in charge also of the fruit trees and also of the gardens. Lately, he became in charge of the gardens in Holit. And all of the things he did, he was for peace. He was a DJ, so he was a DJ of — he played almost entirely Arabic music from the Middle East, about Palestine and Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt. He was a gardener, and he volunteered in Rahat in the garden. And Rahat is a Bedouin city in the south of Israel, near Be'er Sheva. And he also was — he was a volunteer in Masafer Yatta, where Palestinians are suffering from displacement and terror from settlers and soldiers. So he would go there and help them, protect them and use his knowledge as a car mechanic to fix the 4-by-4 car of the volunteers".

As the media focuses on American students, these first hand accounts describe the wonderful lives lost to IDF and Hamas terror. Just following the staggering death toll makes processing near impossible, at least for me. I think we need to hear from people individually to understand what's happening. We need to read what Palestinians have written and what Jewish people have written so that we can move forward towards peace.

This article is not meant to diminish or put down the encampments and their results. While it is imperative that the national chapters of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and encampments around the country examine and remove the antisemitism that creeps into the pro-Palestinian movement, as a Jewish student I feel that Middlebury has worked hard to create a safe space for Jews — Zionist or not. I'm proud to attend a school where our encampment has hosted excellent educational opportunities and where the student leaders condemned the destruction of an Israeli flag off the first floor of Forest Hall. I'm grateful that most of the Middlebury community has attempted to hold onto nuance in an issue so complicated, while recognizing the life and death at stake. I hope that we are able to demand change in a peaceful manner, and hold space for dialogue in a climate where tense discussions can turn threatening.

I commend the encampment for staying focused on the issue at hand. The encampment brought major wins: the college's administration has now called for a ceasefire, promised to become more financially transparent and stated that they will "explore avenues" to bring in displaced students. I hope to refocus the media narrative towards the people murdered in the region, not undermine the work of the activists. Let's continue to demand peace in the region, listen to who the conflict affects most and remember that Jewish and Palestinian safety are not exclusive —they are in fact closely entwined. Violence will continue to perpetuate violence. The imperative from the United States government ought to be on Palestinian and Jewish safety. Universities should focus on what they can do individually in terms of divestment from war manufacturing and housing students instead of quelling students' right to express themselves. Let's re-center our focus on Israel and Palestine and not on "disruption" at our elite institutions.

Empowering Middlebury: a call to action for student-led change in campus organization administration

Op-Ed

Cole Siefer *is a member of the class of 2025.*

My name is Cole Siefer and I am the co-director of the Student Government Association Finance Committee (SGAFC). While I agree with the general sentiment on campus that there are issues with the current system of student organization administration, I think that instead of criticizing it from the sidelines, Middlebury students should step up to take a more active role in creating change to the system. Student engagement is a critical piece of the Middlebury experience, and the challenges student organizations face should be reframed as opportunities to demonstrate our commitment to our peers. Recent student-led efforts have made improvements to bureaucratic processes, highlighting the opportunity we have to shape the student organization experience on campus.

First, a little background: The SGAFC is the student-run committee that distributes the Student Activities Fee (SAF) to student organizations. For the current academic year, 2023-2024, the SAF is $400, but will be raised to $500 for the 2024-2025 academic year. I work with my co-director and our committee members to allocate SAF funds. I love working on the Finance Committee — supporting the wide range of student interests on campus has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my Middlebury College experience. I was happy to read the Zeitgeist 6.0 survey and find that student organizations are so important to Middlebury students. It is a cause I am deeply invested in and working to improve.

I understand the view that the Students Activities Fee should be funding more than it is currently. Although $500 per student seems like a lot of money, the pot shrinks significantly when considering the wide variety of initiatives the Student Activities Fee funds. Middlebury is unique in that it gives the entire Student Activities Fee to our SGA Finance Committee. That means that we fund a wide variety of campus offerings beyond student organizations such as Break Buses, 10 O'Clock Ross, J-term Workshops, Intercultural Graduations, the BIPOC Hair Initiative, Summer Storage and much more.

To those of us involved in student organization administration, it has become clear that the formal process of creating an official organization is not suited for every initiative or idea. The process is very time and resource intensive, especially for the "overwhelmed" (to quote last week's editorial) Student Activities Office. We've seen small groups of enthusiastic students start new clubs that ultimately fail to garner the wider support necessary to continue operations for years to come. Unfortunately, there are many clubs that exist for only a few years before ultimately going inactive. There are already over 150 recognized student organizations on a campus of over 2,500 people. While admirable, I think that motivating students to stay engaged with existing organizations is a more immediate and achievable goal than adding funding and resources to support the creation of new ones.

The Finance Committee and the SAO have been working to improve club administration and the experience of organization leaders, yielding important legislative successes in the past academic year. We've streamlined existing systems and processes to reduce the bureaucratic load on student leaders. The Ticketed Event Loan Program helps student organizations that sell tickets to their performances simplify their operating structure, plan events farther in advance, and keep more of their profits. Despite some issues with the program funding high-cost, low-return performances, it has been a marked improvement over the previous system. In partnership with the Student Activities Office, we have created new opportunities for students to get funding for their ideas to avoid the bureaucracy of registering an official student organization. For example, this year we launched the Exploration Fund, allocating $40,000 from the Student Activities Fee to financially and logistically support students' initiatives and pilot programs without the hassle of setting up a new student organization. Lastly, the SGA set aside $200,000 from SGA Reserves (the destination for unspent SAF dollars) to start the SGA Seizing Opportunities Endowed Fund. The Fund expands the parameters of Opportunity Grants to help all students have access to the full Middlebury College experience, beyond traditional academically-focused financial aid packages.

I recognize that many people do not know that these new opportunities exist, and that these specific programs may not benefit everyone. However, they prove that we can create positive change as students if we work within existing avenues. Here is the question I pose to my peers: If you are upset about the administration of student organizations, how do you plan on getting involved and making positive change? One of the reasons many of us came to a small residential liberal arts college was because students can play an active role in shaping campus life. Students unhappy with the current state of affairs should work to pass legislation, talk to administrators, and mobilize their peers to create the change they want to see. Simply calling for the administration to address every perceived issue on campus is unproductive. We should be empowered members of the Middlebury community that do more than lament our circumstances.

There are many avenues for involvement in student organization administration that are currently underutilized. Join MCAB, the organization that runs much of the College's social programming, including the upcoming spring concert. Run for an SGA senate position; the aforementioned Exploration Fund, Ticketed Loan Program and Seizing Opportunities Endowed fund were all created through SGA legislation. Lastly, you could join us on the SGA Finance Committee next school year; we'd love to have you. The power and responsibility to make Middlebury better lies, in large part, with us.

The Middlebury Campus

EDITOR IN CHIEF
*Maggie Reynolds **
MANAGING EDITORS
*Katie Futterman **
*Ryan McElroy **
BUSINESS MANAGER
Terry Luongo
EDITORIAL BOARD DIRECTOR
*Hannah Sayre **
EDITORS AT LARGE
Charlie Keohane
*Sarah Miller **
*Tejas Srinivasan **
NEWS DESK
*Susanna Schatz *†*
*Cole Chaudhari **
*Olivia Mueller **
Ellie Trinkle
LOCAL DESK
*Julia Pepper *†*
*Mandy Berghela**
Emily Hogan
*Katrina Schwarz **
*Ben Wagner**
OPINIONS DESK
Claire Shapiro †
Sophia Afsar-Keshmiri
Yuvraj Shah
*Shane Silverman **
*Emily Wight**
ARTS & CULTURE DESK
*Acadia Klepeis *†*
Catherine Goodrich
Jack Torpey
SPORTS DESK
*Charles Crounse *†*
Brooke Friberg
Lexi Linafelter
*Jack McGuire **
MULTIMEDIA DESK
June Su †
PHOTO DESK
*Charlie Deichman-Caswell **
Tom Nevins
VISUALS DESK
Skiles Roberts-Salvador
Thea Volpp
ONLINE EDITORS
Sheila Lam †
Jessica Li
Mady Lieblein
Changchang Ma
Hobie Swan
Claire Yang
LAYOUT EDITORS
Olivia Kilborn †
Caroline Harding
Emily Hogan
Sophia Kovacs
COMMUNICATIONS
Frannie Newman †
Jake Gilbert
Benji Sindell
COPY EDITORS
Stephanie Crocker
Mira Ward

**Member of Editorial Board*
† Senior Editor

The Campus reserves the right to deny publication of all or part of a submission for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to: the making of assertions based on hearsay; the relation of private conversations; the libelous mention of unverifiable events; the use of vulgar language or personal attacks; unwarranted requests for anonymity.

More information about the paper and its submission policies can be found online at www.middleburycampus.com.

The opinions expressed by contributors to the Opinions section, as well as reviews, columns, editorial comics and other commentary, are views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the newspaper. The Campus welcomes letters to the editor at 250 words or less, or opinions submissions at 800 words or less.

@middleburycampus

@middcampus

The Middlebury Campus

ON REFORMING CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY

Op-Ed

Alex Evangelidis *is a member of the class of 2024.*

I broke my foot in Davis Library at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 21, 2023. The moment I realized, I began to cry — not because of the pain, but out of frustration. I immediately knew that my life was about to get a lot more inconvenient and exhausting.

At that point, I already had experience caring for my boyfriend, who broke his ankle on campus in February of 2022. I had seen how difficult living independently on this campus was for him during that period of time. However, I had no idea just how existentially exhausting having a mobility impairment on the Middlebury campus would be. My experience living with the challenges of physical impairment, as both patient and caregiver, leads me to call on the college to provide truly accessible living space and laundry services and to facilitate the movement around campus and lower the barriers to education equity for students with short-term and long-term motor impairments.

First, committing to having at least one shower that can accommodate a shower chair and an electric scooter on every floor of a dorm or in every house is imperative. Showering is one of the most difficult daily tasks for someone who is unable to stand, and shower chairs and electric scooters are often needed to make the task possible without risking re-injury. However, most Middlebury showers, whether in Stewart Hall, Gifford Hall or the Atwater suites, cannot comfortably fit a shower chair. Sometimes, the proposed solution is having students move to other floors or buildings with accessible bathrooms. However, moving one's belongings while injured could risk further injury, in addition to the inconvenience.

Second, the college should commit to having truly accessible laundry facilities in every single building that houses students. I currently live in a small house without laundry services. While my foot was brokwen, I had to rely on my boyfriend to do my laundry for me. While he had a broken ankle, even though his dorm had laundry, it was not ADA-accessible, and I had to transport his laundry for him. We were lucky to have had each other for help with these tasks. However, a lot of students don't have friends or partners who can do essential, yet time-consuming tasks like laundry for them. Attempting to carry laundry long distances while on crutches, on a scooter or in a brace can be difficult or dangerous, if not outright impossible.

Building truly accessible laundry facilities in all student housing would allow those with physical impairments to maintain their independence. If installing laundry facilities in all buildings is logistically impossible for the College, the least it can do is increase funding for the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that it can offer school-subsidized Middlebury Wash and Carry services for those who face an unreasonable physical burden around doing their own laundry.

Third, the college should commit to increasing the number of accessible parking spots near academic buildings and dining halls. While recovering from my injury, I noticed that many students in my situation (myself included) get to class by driving. However, this fall and winter, the number of students with accessibility parking permits from the DRC far exceeded the number of available spots, especially near BiHall, Ross and Proctor. I was often late to class because I had to park farther away from academic buildings than anticipated and then crutch up to the accessible entrance. Once, I was even forced to park on the circle of grass outside the BiHall first floor entrance because all of the accessible spots were occupied. Every time I drove myself somewhere to go to class or get food, I was worried that I would be unable to find a parking spot or would have to park somewhere illegally, risking a ticket. This made leaving my house more taxing – both physically and psychologically – than it ever should be. Increasing the number of ADA spots would mitigate this problem.

Fourth, Middlebury must commit to better maintenance of campus walkways. It goes without saying that many offices on campus are understaffed, including facilities. As a result, winter walkways are often left unsalted and icy, which is hazardous for people on crutches or knee scooters as well as fully able-bodied people. Walkways are also unevenly paved in some spots, which makes it very uncomfortable to roll over in a scooter and a tripping hazard for those on crutches or wearing braces. Replacing and properly maintaining uneven pavement would make it both easier for those with mobility impairments to get around campus while also reducing the amount of injuries in the first place.

Lastly, Middlebury must provide technology in every classroom to let students Zoom into class. There were occasions where I could not make it to class because of weather conditions or my pain level, and I requested that professors Zoom me in. However, many of them told me that this was not possible due to a lack of necessary equipment. A system which pushes students to come to class when it is dangerous or painful to do so and punishes them academically if they don't is unacceptable. Updating every classroom with the necessary Zoom technology would ensure that no student misses class due to factors out of their control.

My ankle has since healed and I can once again live independently. During this time, the DRC was an invaluable resource, and I want to thank them for all of the work that they do in making the lives of the most vulnerable students on campus more manageable. However, the improvements that I call for address physical and structural barriers on campus that are beyond the capacity of the DRC to resolve.

Middlebury as an institution must do better to make its living and educational experience truly accessible, especially for those who are physically impaired, whether temporarily or permanently.

AI: Academia on death's door

Op-Ed

Joey Disorbo is a member of the class of 2025.5.

In the 1990s, chess grandmaster Gary Kasparov was defeated by IBM's "Deep Blue" computing system. Many people thought this was impossible — an AI system could never be complex enough to emulate the creative and intuitive processes required in high-level chess. Of course, the final score was 4–2, to Deep Blue.

In 2019, over 20 years later, reigning Dota 2 champion ESports team OG was defeated by OpenAI's computer program OpenAI Five. Widely considered one of the most difficult video games ever made, it was similarly believed among professional players that an AI could not handle Dota 2's complexity: A chess player averages about one move a minute; a Dota 2 player, up to two hundred. But when it was released to the public, over the course of 42,729 total rounds against human teams, OpenAI's Five had a win rate of 99.4%.

There is a trend here. We can all feel a warm breeze; we can all see the dark clouds on the horizon. We are on the precipice of what will single handedly be the most disruptive technological revolution of our time — perhaps of all time. Its implications are ubiquitous, in our case particularly to the Honor Code. And it takes very little critical forethought to come to this realization; so little, in fact, that I assume those who disagree simply choose to do so in spite of overwhelming evidence, largely for their own personal reasons.

To say that a task is impossible for an AI because "only humans are capable of it" is baseless and a unique conceit of human self-importance. It is from this conceit that mankind resisted heliocentrism and evolution, and it may be the same that precludes our acceptance of machines as people in the coming century, à la Blade Runner. The argument that "Humans are uniquely capable of x" has been proven wrong so many times that the question is no longer if a computer could surpass a human in a given field, but when it will.

Hotly debated in our current culture, for example, is the argument over whether AI can create "real art" — but this debate is clearly already decided. In 2022, a photo generated by Dall-E 2 won the Sony World Photography Awards; in the same year the Colorado State Fair awarded first place to a painting generated by Midjourney. In both cases, the judges were unaware that the images were AI-generated. If we can't tell the difference, what difference is there?

While virtually all cases of AI denial are rooted in the aforementioned human chauvinism, it is also safe to say that they are rooted in fear. And this fear is absolutely warranted. Within the next decade, it is reasonable to expect that there will not be a problem a human could solve that a computer could not. This notion alone has staggering implications for all jobs in all industries, and implications we cannot, or dare not, even conceive of in military applications.

As it pertains to us students, though, much of the academic busywork we do will soon be as redundant as cursive. Soon, there will be no schoolwork that an AI could not complete in perfect emulation of its user. Our academic systems will be compromised by the "smart and lazy" whose impudent resourcefulness will weaponize AI so as to never again lift an intellectual finger. In the coming years, all institutions that refuse to relinquish technology will be forced to stumble blindfolded into the minefield of AI integration.

But AI is much more of a minefield to Middlebury so long as we have the Honor Code. If we were to begin the process of AI integration without forfeiting it, we would have to abandon quantitative performance measures altogether. With imminent AI capabilities, cheating will become logarithmically harder to discern until it is practically undetectable. Having both letter grades that matter and an honor code has always been a prisoner's dilemma, but now, with AI tools, the risk associated with cheating is near-zero, while the perceived reward of a better future trajectory is, as it has always been, indispensable.

In other words, if Middlebury intends to continue giving grades that matter to students' lives after college, no honor code will prevent cheating when it will soon be so easy to do so. If Middlebury somehow decided to stop giving grades, then there would be no need for it in the first place. In either case, unfortunately, the Honor Code is rendered impotent, and it soon will be, at best, mutated beyond recognition.

The Zeitgeist 6.0 data on Honor Code violations are egregious to the point of hilarity: 65% of survey respondents reported having broken the Honor Code, almost double from 2019. "Any infraction of the honor system is normally punishable by suspension from the College" (Honor Code, Article III, Section E) — what does one make of the notion that two-thirds of the student body is currently eligible for suspension?

Additionally, the prevalence of AI-related Honor Code violations has also doubled since last year, up to one third. Look around you — one out of every three people you know is using AI. Maybe their grades are better because of it, maybe not. But what is certain is that in the efficiency of AI tools they are saving time, more time than you — time with which they are starting that new club, trying that new hobby, meeting those new people — all while you rot in the library on principle. And when it's all over, you'll both be employed, because this is Middlebury. Though one of you may have had a slightly better time getting there… will that be you?

Irrespective of what we do, AI is imminent. Want it, fear it, love it, loathe it — but do not ignore it.

WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE IN THIS WEEK'S REFERENDUM ON DIVESTMENT

Op-Ed

Lucy Schembre is a member of the class of 2026.5 ***and Aksil Boughida*** is a member of the class of 2026.

On May 6, our Student Government Association (SGA) released a referendum giving the student body the opportunity to vote on divesting our endowment from any company that is involved in arms, arms manufacturing, war profiteering more generally, or is funding Israel's current "war" effort in any capacity. Students and the SGA put an immense amount of time and energy into drafting this referendum and making it available as a means for us to make our voices heard. The goal of this piece is to encourage the student body to vote, drawing from your own beliefs and learnings, and to communicate your opinions to the college's administration and Board of Trustees in a meaningful way. It is absolutely critical that each and every Middlebury student votes by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, May 9. Our intention is not to tell you how to vote. We recognize the myriad of relationships that Middlebury students have with Palestine and Israel. In the spirit of open and free expression, we would like to share why we will be voting "yes" on every divestment request.

We can all recognize the nature of the violence being perpetrated against the people of Palestine and the suffering it brings to civilians on both sides. For the first time in years, college and university students have a global audience. We, as Middlebury students, cannot waste this opportunity to make a strong statement in line with our values. We cannot overstate the potential this referendum has to create institutional change at Middlebury and beyond: Past referendums have been integral in convincing the Board of Trustees to divest the college's extensive endowment from key economic sectors.

"We not only inspire our undergraduates to grapple with challenging questions about themselves and the world," states Middlebury's mission statement, "but we also foster the inquiry, equity, and agency necessary for them to practice ethical citizenship at home and far beyond our Vermont campus." As students, we have an opportunity and the responsibility to practice ethical citizenship by voting in this referendum. This privilege is not shared by many students at American universities, where any sort of public dialogue surrounding this contentious issue has recently been prevented or restricted. This privilege is not shared by Gazan students, whose entire educational infrastructure has been reduced to rubble.

In a BBC article from this past February, journalists wrote, "In December, [the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)] described an assessment that it was killing two civilians for every Hamas fighter as 'tremendously positive,' given the challenges it faced on the battlefield." Regardless of what those alleged challenges were, to describe a civilian-militant casualty rate of 2:1 as "tremendously positive" is unconscionable. That members of the IDF think this way and proudly declare these dehumanizing sentiments publicly is key to understanding the systemic nature and objectives of the ongoing violence. We, as the authors of this piece, are not alone in stating that the actions of the Israeli government go beyond what is acceptable during war.

"In their stated intent to use all means to destroy Hamas," said Agnès Callamard, Amnesty International's Secretary General, "Israeli forces have shown a shocking disregard for civilian lives. They have pulverized street after street of residential buildings killing civilians on a mass scale and destroying essential infrastructure, while new restrictions mean Gaza is fast running out of water, medicine, fuel and electricity…" We believe the best way to push for an end to the unnecessary killing of Palestinians and Israelis alike is by pressuring our institution to guarantee that they will not ever invest in war profiteering, arms, or arms manufacturing.

It takes more than artillery to carry out such extensive and multi-faceted destruction against a people. By voting to support divestment from all Israeli companies, we wish to communicate to the United States and to the state of Israel that Middlebury College will not engage with this economy in any capacity until the Israeli government ends their program of mass destruction against Palestinians.

Students have power. Domestically and globally, people are paying an exceptional amount of attention to American colleges, regardless of whether we deserve it. According to Professor Marsicano at Davidson College, "Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has already mentioned student protests at American universities publicly." Middlebury's actions matter, particularly as an elite and wealthy institution, and we have the ability to set precedents for other schools to follow.

As of June 2023, our endowment was $1.47 billion. Money is power and voting in this referendum is imperative to returning a measure of this power to Middlebury students. Currently, the college can invest its $1.47 billion endowment in companies that profit off the violence in Palestine, Israel and the world as a whole at its discretion. Middlebury has admitted to having $600,000 dollars publicly invested in Israeli companies, which indirectly supports their military activity. They may well have much more invested privately, and we will never know unless we vote in this referendum for increased financial transparency. We believe that abstaining from voting or voting against this referendum's requests expresses a tacit acceptance of our school's ability to make money off of the deaths of human beings and the decimation of life-supporting institutions. By no means will these divestment measures jeopardize Middlebury's economic base, which is disproportionately large compared to those of many similarly-sized colleges and universities. From a sterile economic perspective, Israel is also simply a bad investment right now. By voting in this referendum, you can show Middlebury that we all deserve to have a say in how the school funds our lives here.

Past SGA referendums have had tangible effects on the college's use of the endowment. Although the administration initially rejected students' push for fossil fuel divestment in 2013, "citing difficulty and material cost of withdrawing from a complex portfolio of investments, and the uncertainties and risks that divestment would create," student voices would prove instrumental in altering this decision. In 2018, 70% of students turned out for the referendum on fossil fuel divestment, with 80% in favor. As a result, after six years of student action, the Board of Trustees voted to divest in 2019 and introduced the current Energy2028 plan. Energy2028 proves the student body has the power to influence the way in which our $1.47 billion dollar endowment is invested.

We chose to attend this institution because our values align with Middlebury's mission statement. What does it say about us if we do not take this rare opportunity to interrogate where we truly stand, ask ourselves why we think the way we do, and present our conclusions in an impactful way by voting on this referendum? It is too easy on this campus to become preoccupied with our day-to-day concerns and forget that we are inextricably connected to the broader world and have a responsibility to engage with it. This week's referendum is your opportunity to recognize that connection and cast an informed vote by Thursday, May 9.

Sarah Says: Signing off

Op-Ed

***Sarah Miller** is a member of the class of 2024 and an Editor at Large.*

On a semi-weekly basis, Sarah Miller shares her thoughts on culture and campus life.

I have worked for The Middlebury Campus since the second week of my freshman year, primarily as an Opinions Editor. When I assumed the role of Editor at Large this year (a wonderfully vague title), I was granted almost total discretion over my writing. Soon into the fall semester, I decided to start an opinion column, Sarah Says, to make use of the ideas I'd been jotting down in my notes app.

Assuming the role of a columnist, particularly on a small, liberal arts campus, is a uniquely revealing experience. By drawing on personal experience, the columnist opens their work to public dialogue. When their work relies on the material of their life, this quickly means their life becomes subject to discourse, too.

I waded into vulnerability like a child faced with a cold pool. First, I penned a defense of the English department, then, a manifesto for the writing life and a reflection on my (literally) traumatic semester abroad. Each piece pushed me further into the pool until what emerged was my op-ed reflecting on the romantic loneliness and shame I felt at not having a boyfriend in college.

The romantic article was different for me because it poked at a current hurt — a hurt I was embarrassed to admit mattered so much in an otherwise successful social and academic college career. Before I published the article, I showed it to one of my closest friends; she said it would be her nightmare to publish something so revealing. But I asked her: Is it good?

When I decided to take up writing as a vocation, I decided at the same time to give it my all: as much time, diligence and vulnerability as I was capable. Writers that are unwilling to plumb their own soul are unlikely to move their readers.

So, I published the piece. I was worried that my vulnerability might seem too gratuitous, but it was the piece's vulnerability that resonated. People started to come out of the woodwork. They would email me, DM me and approach me, sometimes at parties, to tell me what my work meant to them.

I cannot overstate this gift. To know anyone was impacted by my writing is an honor I will remember as I move into the next phase of my life. It's easy as a writer to get caught up in ego. I am tortured by every sentence, the gap between the immense feeling inside of me and our inadequate human tools of communication. Writing is by definition a solitary practice and, often, a lonely one. Again and again this column helped remind me that, despite my writer's ego, I write to reach other people. Through writing, both the writer and the reader hope to be seen.

My columns became bolder. I opined on SSRIs, the literary canon, body image and porn. (Note: before you write on porn, someone should tell you your small liberal arts campus will never let you forget it).

I made the Midd alumni email blast. A classmate told me her house wanted to know if I had done a project in the nude or if I was being hyperbolic. (As a general rule, I do not believe in the artistic merits of hyperbole). And, when the premier Middlebury meme account used my column in a meme, I knew I'd made it.

Recently, a student approached me and told me he appreciated my recent op-ed — which focused on the relationship between social media and campus discourse — because it was serious. The obvious implication in his back-handed compliment was that my other columns were unserious. To further clarify, this student explained that, unlike the previous editions of my column, this one did not make him "laugh out loud."

I walked away from this student fuming, mostly because his remarks, so off the cuff, caused me to doubt myself. Yet, as I gradually cooled down, I reflected that this too is one of the benefits of the columnist. People might love your work or despise it, but by virtue of putting your name in print you open yourself to criticism as well as compliments.

Especially on a small liberal arts campus where the criticism can come when you're minding your business in Atwater, this aspect of writing can feel deeply invasive.

Naturally, I am a thin-skinned person. Writers, however, must acquire thicker skin. With each layer of my life that I offered up for appraisal, and sometimes disapproval, I started to build that tougher skin. If there is any truism applicable to a writer's path, it is that one should expect rejection.

Though I happened to disagree with this student, when writing is published it ceases to belong to the author and enters the collective consciousness. In this column I tried to address issues that I see as relevant across the gender spectrum, and my column is grounded in a woman's lens, and I primarily opine on issues which affect women. I do not see these issues as unserious.

In just over two weeks, I will graduate, barring any surprises, without a job or much of a plan. The very precariousness that hangs over my future writing allows me to treasure this forum, the student paper, as a true gift. I don't know where I'm going next, but it is a life with the pursuit of writing at its very center, in no small part due to my time on The Campus and my time writing for every one of you.

Thanks for reading.

STAKING OUT OUR POSITION ON THE ENCAMPMENT

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of The Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

Throughout our meetings this year, we have often wondered whether Middlebury students still have the resolve to agitate for political change on campus. From the pushback to Charles Murray to the fight for Energy2028 and divestment from fossil fuels, Middlebury students of the past have shown their ability to be activists, but we hadn't seen such unified, large-scale movement for change on campus since before the Covid-19 pandemic. That is, until the Gaza Solidarity Encampment last week.

In our editorial board meeting for this issue — which lasted well over our usual hour — we focused on many different points regarding the encampment and its broader implications, and respectfully disagreed in a number of areas. Middlebury students are not a monolith and neither is our editorial board; this editorial recognizes our divisions and is only one of the many meaningful conversations that occurred on campus this past week.

We generally agreed that the civic engagement and dedication of the encampment was admirable, and were happy to see how it ignited public discourse on campus and led to a week of productive debate over free speech, the ongoing conflict in Gaza and the camp's demands. Board members had some reservations about specific aspects of the demands, most notably the demand to "refrain from any form of academic or cultural association with Israel institutions and businesses," which was eventually reflected in the fourth divestment question in the Student Government Association (SGA) referendum.

The protestors staked tents on McCullough lawn for seven nights, beginning the morning of Sunday, April 28. The group of students at the encampment, which grew to about 130 protestors at its peak, called for five demands involving divestment and transparency. They reached an agreement with the college administration and disbanded their tents on Monday, May 6. The same day, the college released a statement meeting the protestors' demand to call for a ceasefire and taking steps toward the divestment demand, affirming the value of financial transparency. The protestors intend to meet with the Board of Trustees this Friday to advocate for their divestment demands, following the SGA referendum on Solidarity with Gaza that closes at midnight on Thursday.

We were pleased that the encampment was peaceful, and that students and the administration were able to work productively together, particularly compared to events at other universities over the past weeks. Dozens of student protestors at Columbia University were arrested by the New York Police Department, over 90 students and faculty at a pro-Palestine protest at Dartmouth College were detained by local and state law enforcement and the University of Vermont enacted disciplinary proceedings toward protestors on Monday. We were grateful that the college respected the protestors' right to freedom of expression without bringing in additional police forces or exerting unnecessary force. This commitment allowed both sides to engage in more meaningful conversations, make negotiations and reach an agreement efficiently.

The encampment made a conscious effort towards inclusion of anyone in the community, particularly in combating antisemitism. Some of our staff attended workshops like "Let's talk about antisemitism" and "Zionist co-opting of Judaism," led by Jewish students at the encampment. The encampment also denounced the cutting in half of the Israeli flag hanging from a window in Forest Hall — even interrupting an ongoing workshop to mention it. Still, though, some Jewish students perceived antisemitic connotations to the chants said by protesters, including "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." Some may have felt that the very existence of the encampment disrupted their day-to-day life on campus. Other students, both in and outside of the encampment, described feeling hesitant to voice opposition to some components of the encampment's proceedings. Even the best efforts of those at the encampment could not fully diminish these sentiments.

In light of the college's decision not to allow regular classes to move to the encampment, we discussed the social and academic pressures surrounding engaging in the protest. While some students and professors reported benefitting from class at the encampment, the administrative decision benefitted the larger community. Faculty members reported granting students the option not to attend class, which some students did take, but Board members cited the possibility of social pressures, either from professors or fellow classmates, in someone's decision to attend class. The college also deserves credit for not preventing professors or staff from attending the protest in a personal capacity.

We appreciated the SGA's referendum, which provided students with an opportunity for direct input on divestment in four specified areas. There was the most debate amongst our Board and students on campus regarding the fourth item that called for a boycott of all Israeli businesses. We have not settled the issue amongst ourselves and do not know what the referendum will return on that point; hopefully students will carefully consider the details of all four topics and return an informed vote by midnight on Thursday.

While the stakes have been removed and the grass is coming back to life on the lawn, we hope the effects of the encampment on discourse at Middlebury will live on past its physical presence on campus. The protest has inspired discussions and sparked questions in a way that we have never seen in recent history as an institution. That is a legacy we should continue: for all of us returning in the fall, let's strive to remember the protest in our dialogue.

Regardless of how people felt about the encampment and the statement the college released on Monday, we agreed that the protest encouraged productive conversations across campus. Whether students attended workshop events at the encampment, read infographics on the Middlebury Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) Instagram, or discussed the encampment with friends in Proctor Dining Hall, the events of last week got people informing themselves on and talking about a decades-long conflict. While the protestors have vowed to continue fighting, any protest that encourages dialogue and awareness of the issues is a victory in and of itself.

FROM MY ARCHIVES: SECOND-GUESSING AS A SECOND SEMESTER SENIOR

Op-Ed

***Charlie Keohane** is a member of the class of 2024 and an Editor At Large.*

For the past three years, I've been hoarding issues of The Campus in my closet. I've passed dozens of issues, some with faded ink, from my tiny Gifford room with a slanted ceiling to summer storage units to different corners of Forest Hall. With graduation approaching and limited space in my suitcase, I leafed through dozens of issues and clipped out my stories, carefully tucking them into a manila envelope for a future scrapbook.

As a senior prone to nostalgia (I mean, I scrapbook), flipping through old articles gave me another excuse to rethink and poke at my four years at Middlebury. My first year of college journalism left no paper trail; one of the many downsides to Covid-19 was no print newspaper. I started writing for The Campus after joining a Zoom room and did not meet other editors face to face until the spring as my first year was wrapping up.

Now that I'm less than three weeks away from graduation, I can't help but reflect and wonder if I "did it right?" This spring — with May 26 looming — I'm grappling with some "buyer's remorse," a feeling of regret. I'm flooded with anxiety about my choices around classes, activities and how I've spent my limited free time in college.

Looking through my Campus articles, I have a sharper understanding of how much Covid-19 impacted my college experience, and how isolation and a lack of in-person activities permeated my first and second years here. We've largely returned to "normal life" and a campus full of in-person events, gatherings and classes. After reviewing my old bylines with the benefit of hindsight, I thought, "Should I have taken a gap year?" Whether walking around my last student activities fair, selecting classes or getting an email ping with an update about this fall, internal voices nagged me, asking why I didn't take a film class or join _____ (insert a wide variety of student organizations, from Dolci to Middlebury Discount Comedy to Community Friends). I envy the younger students who have more time to stretch out, from my senior Feb friends who have another fall to the cheery baby Febs who inhabit the other end of my hall.

I often turn to my mom for advice, and, depending on the situation, she reverts to the same two platitudes: "this too shall pass" or "it is what is it." Many of my college hiccups — a riff with a friend, a lackluster grade — fall firmly in the "this too shall pass" camp. After a phone call home, a walk on the TAM, a cry, a decent night of sleep and a few days of perspective, I usually overcome the rough patch.

While the swirl of regrets and questions will eventually pass (this summer? next year?), this feels more like a "it is what is it" scenario. Because as much disbelief I have about graduation approaching, college will soon be in my rearview mirror. I'll blink the next two weeks away and be back in my childhood bedroom, face-to-face with the paper Middlebury pennant I huge with excitement four years ago, preparing to take my next steps as an alumna.

I wrote an op-ed in the fall about how college life has, for better and worse, conditioned me to think about my life in seasons and semesters. Every new season and semester is marked by the arrival and departure of routines, professors and study spots. I associate every semester with specific songs, class friends and crushes.

Much of my trepidation around graduation is the fear of losing this scaffolding. My upcoming years will no longer fit into neat boxes punctuated with summer and winter breaks. I won't spend my weekdays reading novels, gabbing on the radio airwaves and going on wooded walks with friends. With this slipping away, I'm craning my neck back and questioning if I squeezed everything I wanted out of my time here.

There is, ultimately, no use swimming in second-guessing. Despite my 22-year-old self's "better" judgment, I trust that my 18 to 21-year-old self made the best choices she could at the time, regardless of whether I now think they're "right" or "wrong." Oftentimes, there is no correct choice. I like to keep myself busy, and something I've valued about my Middlebury experience is how there are countless ways to fill my days. There's nothing left to do but make peace with how I filled mine. For every path I did not take, there are just as many (or more) decisions I'm grateful I made, bringing me the friendships, skills and memories that make Middlebury such a difficult goodbye.

One thing I'll carry from my dorm room to new walls is my favorite print from Revolutionary Press. I bought it in 2021 when I spent a long, somewhat lonely summer on campus with lingering Covid-19 restrictions and limited people. Printed in purple ink, two people stand arm-in-arm in a river under a swirling sun. Below the image is a simple, moving quote from science fiction author Octavia Butler. Her words remind me that, whether I like it or not, "There is nothing new under the sun but there are new suns."

AMERICANA: A BRIT'S EYE VIEW

By DAISY INNES
Contributing Writer

THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS/ CHARLIE DEICHMAN-CASWELL
Innes played 'Americana' music on her radio show this year.

If you've tuned into the college's radio station (WRMC), on a Monday at 3 p.m. this semester, you'll have caught me chatting away about my favorite country, Americana and classic American rock music during "The Americana Hour." You'll have heard about the history of California country, the alternative politics and sound of Americana music, the new artists coming out of Nashville, Tenn. that we should be celebrating, and almost certainly, my love for Bruce Springsteen. The only thing that's unusual for this kind of show is that you'll have heard it all in a British accent.

Over the last few years, my passion for American music has grown to the point of near-constant headphone-wearing. At home in the United Kingdom, my record collection consists of almost entirely American artists, and sometimes it feels like I'm the only person under the age of 60 looking for the Glen Campbell records at second-hand record shops.

I don't really know where this passion came from, or who was the first artist to spark my love for the sound of country and Americana. But it's never even just been the music — it's the classic cars, the cowboy hats, the dusty deserts, the Steinbeck novels and the black-coffee-in-a-diner Americana that I've always felt a strange pull towards. It may be a romanticization, but nonetheless, it's a good story.

If you're not very involved in the country world, you might not know that the number of subgenres is bigger than ever before. Whether you think it's good or bad, country-pop has solidified its place in the genre and on the radio. Country-rock artists use pedal steel guitars like no one else can. Red Dirt country grew out of rural Texas and Oklahoma and has an undeniable sense of honest independence about it. Americana, in the musical sense, is a genre that allows for a combination of American musical traditions including country, blues, folk and rock — it brings together the traditional with the modern and is often used by politically outspoken artists to connect American music with American morals.

Ultimately, whether it's a cleanly produced country-pop chart-topper you hear on the radio or a poetic alt-country ballad from an artist who seems to have emerged out of nowhere, they all have some kind of story to tell. Country songwriting has a long history with roots in the folk songs of England and Ireland. Fundamentally, it's a type of storytelling, and stories are inherently universal.

However, there's still a stigma around country music due to its associated politics and its "worth" as an artistic genre. The immediate reaction to revealing myself as a country music fan, at least at home in the UK, is one of definite surprise and confusion, with a little judgment added in, too. Why would you listen to country? Isn't it all trucks, beers and girls in denim? Some of it certainly is. Bro-country isn't really my thing, but that's okay — I'm pretty sure I'm not its target audience. But stunning lyrics, classic instrumentation and incomparable songwriting are. With artists like Zach Bryan, Wyatt Flores and Charles Wesley Godwin finding huge success with the honest music they create, there seems to be a revival of musical storytelling going on.

Even before arriving in Middlebury for my semester abroad, I knew that I wanted to join the radio station. I thought that I'd find people here who listened to the same music as me — surely the Americans listen to Americana? To some extent, I did. I've made friends here who are equally delighted to spend too much time debating whether Eagles or The Byrds were the better original country-rock group. Hearing someone playing James Taylor on the air reminds me of being the youngest person in the audience at a JT concert in Manchester, U.K. a couple of years ago. This spring, I took a class on the Cultural Work of Country Music, discussing everything from Buck Owens' influence on the creation of the Bakersfield Country sound to how Tyler Childers' songwriting connects him to his Appalachian roots. I've shared my interests, too, inspiring fellow exchange students from France to listen to Kacey Musgraves and Sierra Ferrell.

For the same reason my favorite novel is S.E. Hinton's "The Outsiders," my favorite music has a distinct Americanness. It tells the stories of personal relationships: the massive moments, the mundane every day and the way that tomorrow will always bring another sunrise. It depicts everyday life in America, the good and the bad. The "three chords and the truth" tradition of country music has allowed artists to share those truths for decades. Through my weekly slot on WRMC, I've tried to tell these stories. I've played 90s country hits just because they're fun, new artists whose voices I think should be projected and classic artists who have provided soundtracks to millions of lives.

So, why country? Why Americana? No, I didn't grow up in Nashville, Texas or Laurel Canyon, Los Angeles, but I did grow up reading and listening to stories. I can't explain why hearing a live recording of John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads" on a vinyl I bought at a local record shop for less than five pounds makes me feel at home in West Virginia, but it does. I can't explain why the words of Paul Simon, Carole King, Jackson Browne and Gram Parsons provide me with a comfort that no other music can, but they do. I can't explain why Charley Pride's "Roll On Mississippi" fills me with nostalgia for a place I've never even been close to, but it sure does. I can only suggest that storytelling has a home in Americana, and I've found a home in storytelling.

So, thank you Middlebury and WRMC for giving this British girl the chance to have her "Americana Hour." If you've listened over the last semester, I hope you enjoyed the stories.

REEL CRITIC: "THE FALL GUY"

By JACK TORPEY
Arts & Culture Editor

Ryan Gosling and Emily Blunt are ready to put their Barbenheimer rivalry behind them. In "The Fall Guy," stuntman-turned-director David Leitch's latest action-comedy extravaganza, the supporting stars of last summer's two biggest hits join forces to trade in feminist satire and apocalyptic angst for an unabashedly giddy kickoff to Hollywood's favorite time of the year.

Anyone making the trip to the theater hoping to watch a pair of glamorous movie stars quip and flirt their way through a comic romance — all punctuated with scenes of over-the-top action — will be more than satisfied by Leitch's film. For those expecting an early-summer blockbuster of narrative intensity and visual splendor, it might be best to wait for "Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga." Powered entirely by the charisma and chemistry of its leads, "The Fall Guy" is a funny, dramatically serviceable film that celebrates stunt performers but ultimately reminds everyone watching that Hollywood filmmaking is a movie star's game.

Leitch, who for years took all the hits and falls that made actors like Brad Pitt and Matt Damon look like real action heroes, directed his fifth feature to be a love letter to the stuntmen and stuntwomen who carry out the most dangerous tasks on a film shoot, but often receive the least credit for the finished work. His fictional ambassador for the stunt community is Colt Seavers (Gosling), an industry-best "fall guy" who doubles for Tom Ryder (Aaron Taylor-Johnson), the world's most popular action star. In between takes that require him to plummet through the air and be launched by explosions, Colt begins a fling with camera operator Jody Moreno (Blunt), an aspiring director. She eventually gets her big break, but not before Colt is badly injured in an on-set accident and shuts himself away from her, icing their kindling relationship.

Eighteen months later, the disillusioned stuntman receives a call from Ryder's producer (Hannah Waddingham) to work on his current film, which Jody is directing. But when Colt arrives on set, he becomes entangled in a deadly conspiracy involving the unhinged star that threatens to shut down the production and end Jody's filmmaking career before it has begun. "The Fall Guy" follows Colt as he races to uncover the mystery surrounding Ryder, save Jody's movie and win back her love.

Gosling has undergone somewhat of a brand transformation following his uber-popular, Oscar-nominated performance as Ken in "Barbie." After years of starring in serious dramas like "The Place Beyond the Pines" and "Blade Runner 2049," the Canadian actor apparently now wants to take on lighter, more fun roles that allow him to tap into his, well, "Kenergy." Gosling's work in "The Fall Guy" reflects just that intention. Chiseled, golden and roughed up with blood and grime, he plays Colt Seavers as a hunk with a heart. Sure, the stuntman can hold his own in a brawl or a high-speed chase, but he can also get in touch with his feelings, a uniquely modern badge of masculinity that is hilariously displayed in a scene of Colt crying alone in his car to Taylor Swift's "All Too Well."

In this moment and many others, Gosling exudes that easy charm that makes his character the winning combination of cool and relatable, an adrenaline junky who wants nothing more than to find a quiet beach and sip spicy margaritas with the woman he loves. It doesn't hurt that the star of "The Big Short" and "The Nice Guys" is also sneakily one of the funniest actors working in Hollywood today. Gosling's dry sense of humor and surprising knack for slapstick permeate "The Fall Guy," and if the film ultimately goes down as a hit, it will be predominantly because of the consistent laughs earned by its leading man.

The rest of that credit will go to Blunt, fresh off her first Academy Award nomination for her searing performance in "Oppenheimer" and again in strong form for this markedly more upbeat summer flick. Blunt is very clearly having a blast playing Jody Moreno, leaning into the manic-director schtick in one scene, singing Phil Collins' "Against All Odds" at a karaoke show in another and sparking playfully romantic fireworks with Gosling's Colt in all the rest. Her best moment comes when she crashes Colt's Swift-scored pity party, teasing him and hopping in the car to lay down the ground rules of their working relationship. Blunt is a Brit, and she lets her London accent rip all throughout "The Fall Guy," never better than in this charged scene that sees Jody share her first real conversation with Colt since they separated.

The "Edge of Tomorrow" star is not just a verbal actress, though. In an action scene that brings her unknowingly into close-quarters combat with a disguised Colt, Jody unleashes a comically long barrage of kicks, punches and wrestling holds that highlights Blunt's athleticism and proves why she has been so successful at crossing genres over the course of her career. She won't get the Oscar nod for this role, but Blunt can add her work in "The Fall Guy" to her growing resume of solid performances in entertaining films.

And yes, Leitch's film is a highly entertaining one. From a Guinness-World-Record-setting car stunt in which real-life fall guy Logan Holladay executes an 8.5-revolution cannon roll to a neon-hued, psychedelic fight scene that showcases Gosling's chops as a comedic action star, it has all the makings of the popcorn movies that this season of cinema is all about. The best summer blockbusters, however, transcend simple escapism and become powerful, lasting works of pop culture — think "Jaws," or pretty much any Steven Spielberg film released between May and September. "The Fall Guy" understandably never reaches those lofty heights, weighed down by a bland plot and somewhat stale action. Even so, it promises and delivers two hours of laughs and thrills provided by a pair of Hollywood's hottest stars, making for an undeniably good time at the theater. In these crazy times of social tension and political uncertainty, what more can we ask of a movie?

Reflections from an A&Senior

By ACADIA KLEPEIS
Senior Arts & Culture Editor

If you flip past news, past local and past opinions (a more time-consuming feat than ever this week), you'll arrive at the ever-evolving Arts & Culture section (A&C). If news is the responsible eldest, local the well-adjusted middle child and opinions the loud, jaded teen , A&C is the baby, the bright young thing that still has a sparkle in its eye. Once titled Arts & Academics, today's A&C is known by some as the fun section, always ready with a review or a crossword to distract you from the work that brought you to a Proc booth in the first place.

Having written and edited for the section since freshman year, I've certainly A&Ceen some things. Just this year, the freedom A&C offers has allowed me to chase down the voice of Davis, unpack my favorite Christmas songs and uncover the mystery of the man always drawing in a coffee shop (to say nothing of letting me write three times about Taylor Swift). What other section is so driven by student passions or so open to suggestions? Topics may vary, but the rush of seeing my name or my friends' in black and white on a Thursday morning still hasn't faded.

In fall 2020, eager to meet people in a mask-shrouded campus, I reached out to then-A&C editor Rain Ji about a story spotlighting Middlebury theater majors during Covid-19, despite never having conducted a formal interview in my life. Part of my earnest email reads, "Although I don't have experience writing for a newspaper (my high school didn't have one) I'm interested in exploring what writing for The Campus would be like." That first (outdoor, socially distanced) interview lit a spark that inspired me to take on a second Covid arts piece about that year's invite-only Cocoon, and before I knew it, I was hooked.

During my first-year spring, my roommate Sarah Miller and I both joined The Campus as editors, tuning into weekly staff Zooms from our second-floor Hepburn double ("double" also being a word that often described our audio feeds). In a semester in which three of my four classes were online, descending into the Hepburn basement once a week to edit and chat face-to-face with my fellow A&C editors in The Campus' HQ was one of the best parts of my week. Getting to know students from different circles, finding out about cool events and hearing from upperclassmen what Midd had been like pre-Covid made me justly hopeful for the next three years.

In all my semesters with A&C, the undisputed highlight of any editing session comes at the end, after the last Oxford comma has been deleted and the final class year apostrophe has been reversed ('24, begone). Then begins the brain-wracking. Synonyms, homophones and idioms are thrown out rapid fire, quickly followed by giggles at the more ridiculous suggestions. Our goal? A trademark A&C title, complete with a pun or a play on words. We used to place bets about how punny our headlines could be and still get past the executive team. The answer? Pretty punny. (Some recent favorites include "Ducking tradition," "With a pinch of Saltveit" and "Chekhov, please").

Beyond wordplay, the best part about writing for The Campus is meeting people — and at A&C, those people are artists. But you never know where you'll find them.

On one of the less sodden days of last summer, I found myself at Haymaker Bun Company, where the purple cursive of their summer latte menu caught my eye. Upon closer examination, I spotted the artists' tag, and the seed of a story was born. A hop, skip and a jump later I was sitting riverside with chalkboard artist Caitlin Sausville. After our formal interview ended, we got to chatting about the local theatre scene. Casually, she asked whether any musicals were ever put on at Town Hall Theater, where I had interned the summer before. "Oh yes," I remember telling her. "Auditions for 'Next to Normal' are actually this afternoon." Weeks later, I found out that not only had Sausville whipped off an audition on such short notice, but she had scored a major role. That January, I had the pleasure of working backstage on that very production.

"I wouldn't have known about the show and certainly wouldn't have walked straight over to the theater that day if it hadn't been for her," Sausville wrote on Instagram about the cosmic coincidence. "Pay attention to the universe, folks... there are always pieces of your puzzle waiting for you to find them if you just look up once in a while and say 'yes.'"

Sausville's words perfectly capture the connection and spontaneity that define our section of the paper. Whether your passion is theatre, film, visual art, music or something else entirely, the broad umbrella of A&C is happy to shelter you — and is sure to leave you singing in the rain.

THEATRE DEPARTMENT STICKS THE ORLAND-ING

By CATHERINE GOODRICH
Arts & Culture Editor

In her 1929 essay, "A Room of One's Own," Virginia Woolf writes, "It is fatal to be a man or woman, pure and simple. One must be woman-manly, or man-womanly." Indeed, Woolf's genderbending reveries came alive this past weekend in Wright Theater.

"Orlando," a play written by Sarah Ruhl based on the Woolf novel of the same name, is a shape-shifting, centuries-long exploration of life, lust and love. The production follows the titular character Orlando (Zeph Santiago '26) and his boyish antics as a noble in the court of Queen Elizabeth (Elsa Marrian '25) until overnight, at age 30, he wakes up as a woman.

"Orlando" is a canny investigation of gender, as shown by moments like Orlando's transformation, during which she realizes that women "are not obedient, chaste, and scented by nature." Ruhl's script is clever, cheeky and requires immense creativity — qualities that the cast delivered in spades.

The show featured an eight-person chorus that operates as an extension of Orlando's identity with members turning into various supporting characters on a dime. Their respective performances were the wind under the production's wings, the cast carrying out an impressive balance between tight choreography and unrestrained playfulness. "Orlando" commands vulnerability, composure and unwavering confidence from its actors.

"I needed to communicate to the actors that this is a place where we can trust each other, and play, and let go, let go of what's stopping us from expressing ourselves," director Cláudio Meideros, chair of the theater department, told The Campus. "I mean, that's what this play is about."

The chorus of supporting actors rose to the challenge. Marrian was a show-stopping, bejeweled and glamorous queen with "the stomach of a king," Ryan Ulen '26 became an amorous and gracious Marmaduke, and Jamie Schwartz '27 was a sultry Sasha with a perfectly controlled Russian accent. Santiago was luminous in the lead role, commanding the stage with masculinized grace and feminized strength. The cast played off one another with expert ease and successfully captured the many facets of the charm of "Orlando."

Above all, "Orlando" champions the pleasures of living a life in full. The production sparkles with queer flourishes and poetic introspection. Woolf's novel was inspired by her lover, Vita Sackville-West, and commemorates West as charismatic, dynamic and reflective.

"More than anything, this show is a love letter, period," Santiago told The Campus. "And what better way to bring joy to your community than by playing a literal love letter?"

Medeiros agreed. "I was very focused from the beginning on joy," he said. "If this play was going to have an impact, it would have to be joyous, it would have to be a celebration of queer joy."

The theme of queer joy informed every aspect of the production; the acting, set design, lighting, costuming and makeup were all unified by rhapsodically queer stylings. The stage was set against a backdrop resembling crumpled paper, creating a sense that "Orlando" had cracked the spine of Woolf's novel and was playing off the page.

COURTESY PHOTO/ CLINTON BRANDHAGEN

Orlando (Zeph Santiago '26) and chorus enjoy themselves in 17th Century Constantinople.

"The stage was great because it wasn't busy. It was just the doors, projection, and just a sandbox, essentially," Santiago said. "It was so freeing to be on a stage with so much space and it was also demanding because us as actors had to take up that space at every given moment. A show like this lends itself to the people being the space."

The actors took charge of the stage with their talent and incredible makeup, hair and costumes. Because "Orlando" spans five centuries, the makeup, hair, and costuming signaled with grace (and tremendous style) the ruling trends and attitudes of each era in "Orlando," from Elizabethan trunk hose to flapper-esque bobbed hair. The play frequently refers to how each distinct "spirit of the age" influences Orlando's tastes and relationships.

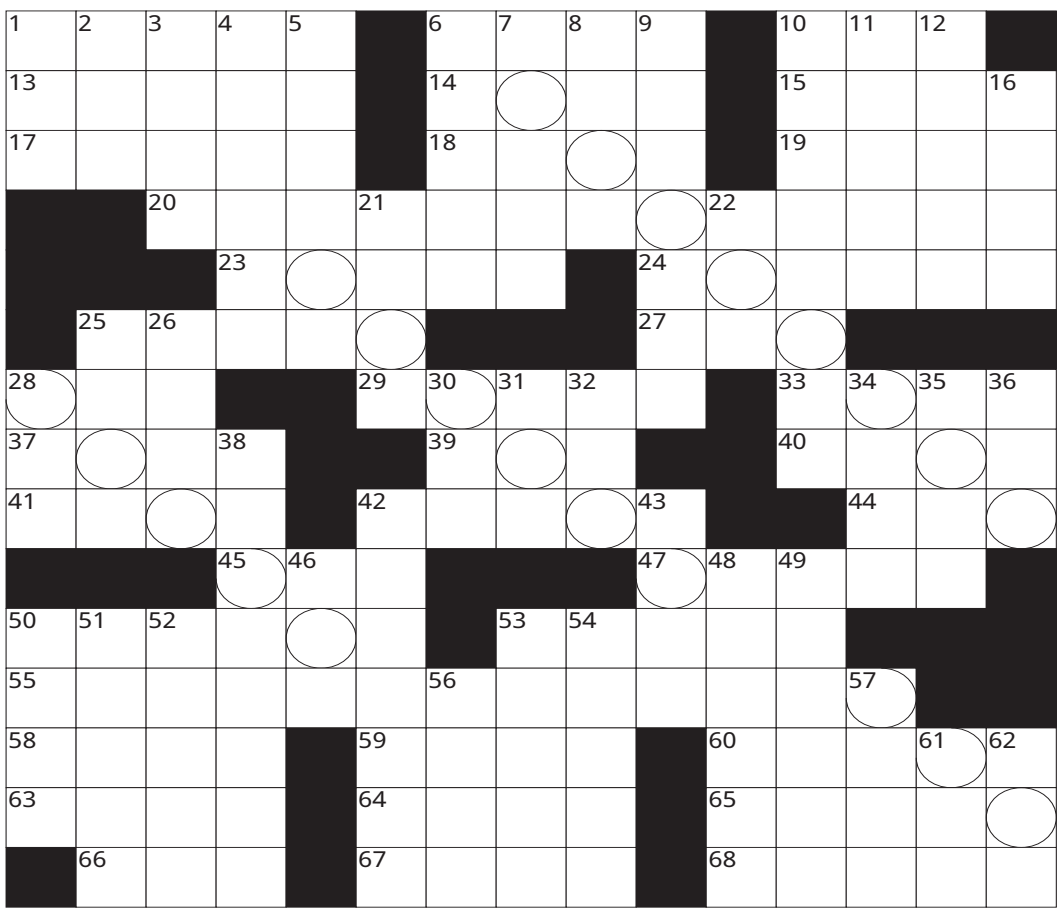
"The costuming was gorgeous and really informative for me," noted Santiago. "Gender binaries so rule the different periods that Orlando goes through and so by dressing as [a] nobleman, I was like 'oh I feel what this is doing to me physically' and that was so nice to lean into."

Santiago donned many costumes – he and I agreed that our favorite was Orlando's blue Victorian dress – and wigs to communicate the character's metamorphosis, while the chorus wore cinched corsets and makeup that would make Trixie Mattel blush to chauffeur the audience's joyride through the many transformations of "Orlando."

In a time when rethinking gender norms has almost become the norm, "Orlando" is a story that resonates deeply. For many, opening a laptop to watch an episode of "Drag Race" or to rewatch "Bottoms" is a welcome respite, but there's no denying that seeing queerness embodied live by your friends, classmates and professors is nothing short of magical.

Crossword Confessions

Avery Goldstein and Ella Charnizon



ACROSS
1 Leave alone
6 Vegetarian's no-no
10 Horton heard one
13 Vowel-heavy Wordle starter
14 Shrek, e.g.
15 Moves like a bunny
17 One way to commute
18 Cornstarch alternative
19 Smidgen
20 One diving right into their work?
23 Gumbo pods
24 Start of a Beatles refrain
25 Mount in Exodus
27 Color TV pioneer
28 Can February March? No, but April May, for one
29 "Hasta la vista"
33 Sunday Night Environmental Group
37 Hoot and a half
39 Quaint lodging
40 Fog
41 Sicilian volcano
42 Put back to zero
44 Sell-out sign
45 Greek letter after sigma
47 Busybody
50 "9 to 5" singer
53 "It's a Wonderful Life" director Frank
55 Let the cat out of the bag, and a hint to the circled letters in this puzzle
58 Me, myself, ___
59 College in New Rochelle, N.Y.
60 Relish
63 "Grease" extra
64 Tree-hugger?
65 Hamilton, to Burr
66 Braz. neighbor
67 Duel tool
68 Where the deer and the antelope play

DOWN
1 Word before rat and after chocolate
2 Big name in ice cream
3 Dora the Explorer's purple squirrel friend
4 Sailor's guide
5 Golden State motto
6 "How Far I'll Go" singer
7 Waffles enjoyed by Eleven in "Stranger Things"
8 Limp as ___
9 Nightmares
10 Oscar-winning 2014 film featuring Miles Teller
11 Kerfuffle
12 Went (for)
16 Delhi wrap
21 Diva's delivery
22 "The Bachelor" network
25 Spades, but not shovels
26 Privy to
28 Start to fix?
30 Yahtzee cube
31 Connections
32 Binary digit
34 Condé ___
35 Cornell of Cornell University
36 Nat ___
38 Snitching
42 143 minutes, for the average movie
43 Ilk
46 "You've got mail" co.
48 Opening track on Ed Sheeran's "Divide" album
49 "Hey Jude" syllables
50 H.S. junior's exam
51 Sleep problem
52 Subway passenger
53 Perfume with myrrh, say
54 Belittle
56 Earring shape
57 "Frozen" reindeer
61 Texter's "Holy cow!"
62 Manhattan component

Women's lacrosse wins NESCAC title, turns attention to NCAA competition

By CHARLES CROUNSE
Senior Sports Editor

A lot can happen in 732 days. Two senior classes have graduated from Middlebury. Two new classes have joined it. But in all of those days, Middlebury Women's Lacrosse has not lost a single game.

An element of inevitability was in the air as the Panthers took to the turf at Peter Kohn Field this past Sunday — a field they have turned into a fortress over the past few years. Coming into Sunday's final, the team had won 46 games, a brace of national championships and a NESCAC title since their last defeat.

They added a second NESCAC championship on Sunday, securing an 11–5 win over Wesleyan University.

Despite the persistent rain on Sunday afternoon, the Panthers played with the same ferocity that they have displayed all season. After falling 4–1 early in the contest, Middlebury leveled the score by the end of the third quarter. A decisive goal from Hope Shue '25 pushed the Panthers ahead early in the final quarter. Middlebury never looked back from there, putting six unanswered goals past the Cardinals' defense.

Maggie Coughlin '24.5 — who scored twice during the exhilarating game — noted that Shue's goal was a turning point in the game.

"As soon as Hope scored that goal to put us up 6–5, I knew we were going to win," Coughlin said. "We felt so connected, we started to see holes in the Wesleyan defense and everything started to flow."

Observers have praised Middlebury's free-flowing offense this year, with Shue and Caroline Adams '26 and all winning NESCAC Player of the Week Awards. The team averages a staggering 16.06 goals per game, and Shue and Susan Rowley '24 top the NESCAC leaderboard for goals scored. Chloe Newman '24, a defender and one of the team's captains, said she was impressed, but not surprised, by her teammates' scoring feats.

"Everyone on the team has such a big role," Newman said. "We go against the attack in every practice, so we know how strong they can be and they proved that again on Sunday."

While the Panthers' attack has enjoyed the spotlight, the defense quietly put together one of their most dominant seasons in recent memory. The team has conceded just 109 goals, 20 fewer than any other team in the NESCAC. In their playoff run, the Panthers were particularly stingy, allowing just 15 goals per game in three games against nationally-ranked opponents.

"Our defense is always so good, and they really did a phenomenal job against Wesleyan," Coughlin said. "On attack, we decided we needed to give them a break and start scoring some goals."

Middlebury's defensive tenacity was recognized on Monday, as the NESCAC selected Newman as their player of the week. While the award singled her out for her six turnovers and six ground balls collected over the course of the weekend, Newman said the award equally recognized the work of all her teammates.

"I think the Player of the Week award is a testament to how well the entire defense played more than anything else," Newman said. "The entire team worked so hard in practice this week, and to see it all pay off made it a really great weekend."

Shue was named NESCAC Offensive Player of the Year on Tuesday, May 7.

The team now turns its attention to the national tournament,

COURTESY PHOTO

Hope Shue '26 is the top scorer in the NESCAC.

where it will host the winner of Endicott College vs. St. John Fisher University. The Panthers are the tournament's reigning champions and the second winningest team in Division III history. They will look to add the program's fourth consecutive title later this May, building momentum after not competing in 2020 or 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The team's rich history gave the Panthers a boost this past weekend, as the class of 2004 returned to commemorate the 20 year anniversary of its national title and meet the team that is well-poised to claim it again.

"The alumni connection was especially important this year," Coughlin said. "We always talk about standing on the shoulders of those who came before us, and having the alumni here made that message extra powerful."

20 years after Middlebury's famous perfect season in 2004, the Panthers are hoping to repeat history by winning both the NESCAC and national championship without a single loss. They are now just five games away from this hope becoming a reality.

MEN'S TENNIS COMPETES IN NESCAC TOURNAMENT, TO HOST NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP FIRST ROUND

By JONATHAN BUCHHOLZ
Staff Writer

This past weekend, the Middlebury men's tennis team competed in the NESCAC championship as the top seed and two-time defending champions. After handily defeating Trinity College 5–0 in the first round, the Panthers narrowly lost to eventual winners Bowdoin College 4–5 in the semifinals.

Middlebury was poised for an expected victory in the first round, facing the eighth-ranked Trinity Bantams, who narrowly qualified for the tournament.

After doubles combos of Neel Epstein '25 and Robby Ward '24, Hugh Hentschel '26 and Thehan Wijemanne '27 and Julian Wu '26 and Aidan Harris '24 all beat their opponents, the Panthers needed just two singles victories to cement their win.

Epstein and Noah Laber '24 won their individual matchups to clinch the win for the Panthers. Middlebury's win over the Bantams came as no surprise. Middlebury has not lost a match to Trinity since the 1999-2000 season, and earlier this season, Middlebury swept Trinity 9-0,

as they have done for the past several years.

The next day, Middlebury faced off against a more threatening opponent: the Bowdoin Polar Bears. A week before the tournament, the Panthers hosted Bowdoin and handily beat them 6–3.

In their first matchup on April 27, Middlebury took an early lead by dominating the doubles matches. Those three wins provided the momentum for Middlebury to secure three more singles matches from Bowdoin.

This past weekend, the Polar Bears were hungry for revenge. Bowdoin had the first word, winning the first doubles match of the day.

Middlebury won the remaining two doubles matches and two singles matches, leaving the result up to the #4 singles match. Last week, Epstein toppled his Bowdoin opponent in two sets after a first set loss.

This week, Epstein rallied to snatch the second set off of his opponent in a hard-fought tiebreaker win, but ultimately, Bowdoin's Mark Kneiss won the final set to secure the win for his team.

COURTESY PHOTO

Hugh Hentschel '26 in the midst of a doubles match against the Trinity Bantams.

AUDREY MACLEAN SECURES NESCAC ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

By JOSH ROSENSTEIN
Staff Writer

The Middlebury Women's Track and Field team wrapped up their season recently by triumphing at the NESCAC Championship, their third title in a row. The team had a number of standout performers, but arguably no one left a bigger impression than Audrey MacLean '27, who crossed the finish line first in both the 3,000-meter steeplechase and the 5,000-meter race.

The first-year's impressive debut season earned her NESCAC Rookie of the Year honors, making her the first panther to win the award since 2001.

"One of the captains broke the news to me in the locker room," MacLean said. "I had no idea and was really surprised, but also very excited."

MacLean is one of just three Panthers to win a pair of individual NESCAC event titles in a single year, the most recent being Cassie Kearney '22, who did so in 2022. MacLean was dominant all season, earning United States Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) National Athlete of the Week, as well as the NESCAC Women's Track Athlete of the Week after placing first and second in her two events on the team's spring break trip to southern California.

"It's been a long season and a lot of work, but it also went by really fast,"MacLean said. "I would not have made it this far without my team."

MacLean was also named the NESCAC Rookie of the Year in the fall after an outstanding cross country season. She placed in the top-10 in every race she ran and finished as runner-up at the NESCAC Championship in the six kilometer race. Despite her individual success, MacLean emphasized the role her teammates have played in her success this season.

"Middlebury Cross Country has one of the best team cultures I could imagine," MacLean said. "Everyone helps, encourages, and motivates each other. This team feels like family."

MacLean's teammates were equally appreciative of her presence and contributions. Captain Tatum Peskin '24 was full of praise for MacLean's attitude and work ethic.

"Audrey is very humble and will do anything for the team," Peskin said. "She truly loves running and brings her positive attitude to everything she does."

MacLean's spring season continues as she will race at the Farley Inter Regional Extravaganza at Williams College on May 10 and 11 as she attempts to qualify for the NCAA Championships.